ARPASIA;

OR, THE

WANDERER.

A

NOVEL.

By the AUTHOR of the NABOB.

In THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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ARPASIA;

OR, THE

WANDERER.

CHAP. I.

Conjectures.

THROUGH the rich and beautiful vale of Eveſham a hired poſt-chaiſe was going on at a good rate, yet not ſo ſwiftly but the figure of one of the two females within it attracted the notice of a young man travelling on horſeback.

A POOR old labourer, whom age and infirmity had bent nearly double, was tottering under the weight of a ſhovel of dirt, but who threw it down in haſte to examine the carriage, exclaiming "It is ſhe her-"ſelf!"—"Ah!" cried the young man on horſeback, "that beauty, what bene-"volence there appears blended in that "ſweet face." While yet he was ſpeaking the glaſs of the chaiſe was let down, and a hand white as ſnow threw out a half guinea to the poor labourer, and a voice in the ſofteſt accents pronounced a bleſſing on his helpleſs age. "I did not ſtop for "this," ſobbed out the old man, wiping his eyes with the lappet of his coat—then looking at the piece of money, preſſed it to his lips, ſighed, put it in his pocket, and ſilently, penſively betook himſelf to his employment of mending the road. All this was the occurrence of a moment. But the effect made a laſting impreſſion on the mind of the young man, and filled it with a variety of conjectures.

THERE

THERE are ſome perſons whoſe ideas are capable of comprehending the whole of any thing from the minuteſt part by a kind of inſtinctive knowledge. Such was the travelier. At one glance then, for the time hardly admitted of more, he thought at leaſt he read the character of the beauteous beſtower of charity: and yet half a guinea was ſuch a ſum to give to one that a ſixpence would have been a treaſure to, and the hired chaiſe, unattended, gave no very high idea of the wealth of the donor. He rode on full of thought—who could ſhe be? Yet why ſhould he ſuffer her image to float on his fancy? He ſighed deeply—He ſtopped his horſe, whoſe ſteps had accorded with his own feelings, going only the ſloweſt walk—involuntarily he turned round and ſaw the chaiſe for which he felt ſuch intereſt aſcending a diſtant hill. Rooted to the ſpot, he remained with his eye fixed on the carriage, while yet it appeared, and with a heartfelt ſigh he relinquiſhed it for ever, repeating the bene-

diction which ſtill vibrated on his ear— And it was not ill adapted, as her youth and ſex rendered her as helpleſs almoſt as the poor man her bounty had relieved.

THE leaſt triſle becomes important when we annex it to particular things. He watched the very track of the wheels, but preſently an object ſtruck him of real conſequence; no other than the poor labourer, whoſe countenance even yet bore teſtimony of his ſenſibility and gratitude. The exclamation which at this inſtant he recollected, of "It is ſhe herſelf!" determined him to make an immediate acquaintance with the old man, nor could he help congratulating himſelf on this piece of good fortune which he had nearly overlooked. "At leaſt," ſaid he, "I ſhall "hear who ſhe is, and whether there is a "poſſibility of ever meeting with her, and "rendering her any ſervice." Something, however, which came acroſs his mind repreſſed in an inſtant the gleam of joy, which

which the bare idea of ſerving her had painted on his expreſſive features. He gently ſhook his head, and again penſively ſighed. He almoſt repented of his intention—but the ſoft languor which had given way to the moſt benignant and animated glow of countenance in the fair traveller while ſhe beſtowed her bounty, again recurred to his memory. Her whole form preſented itſelf to his "mind's eye." Had he been a Reynolds or a Romney he could have drawn her picture. He contemplated her image, and it loſt nothing by being abſent. Her beautiful light brown hair hung in looſe curls low upon the ſhoulder of her black habit; the white and red of her lovely cheek were ſo happily mixed, that it was difficult to diſcern where the one ended or the other began. Her ſoul might be read through her expreſſive hazel eyes, which were ſhaded by the fineſt formed eyelids, fringed with long dark laſhes, under the moſt regular arched eye-brows. Such was the exterior of the lovely

ſtranger, whoſe idea had ſuperſeded in the breaſt of this young man almoſt every other conſideration; but ſeeing the labourer prepare to quit his work, he felt all his curioſity return, and he haſtened up to him to proſecute his plan of enquiry.

CHAP-

CHAP. II.

Interrogatories.

"AND who is the lady that paſſed "juſt now, my good old man?" he aſked in a gentle voice, "I thought you ſeemed "to be acquainted with her."

"ALAS," anſwered the old man, while the tear gliſtened in his aged eye, "I fear I have ſeen the laſt of her, I tra- "velled five miles to take a laſt look." He drew the back of his hand acroſs his face, and turned his head aſide. The heart of the young man on horſeback ſeemed to aſſimilate towards him—he diſ- mounted—"I cannot help, my friend," ſaid he, "being rather intereſted in the "welfare of ſo worthy a character as your

" gratitude tells me you poſſeſs, that ſen-
" ſibility does you the utmoſt honour.
" Come, ſit down on this bank—ſtay—
" give me your hand, I will aſſiſt you
" —and now will you give me leave to
" aſk you a few queſtions concerning that
" lovely girl; at the ſame time aſſuring
" you I have no one bad view in the
" enquiry; but I felt myſelf ſo uncom-
" monly ſtruck with her perſon and the
" ſweetneſs which accompanied her gift to
" you, that I cannot reſiſt the curioſity of
" knowing more about her."

" God bleſs your honour!" returned the other, " you will do me a kindneſs in
" ſuffering me to talk of her. I could do
" ſo all my days, but I ſhould end them
" long before I could finiſh her praiſe.
" You muſt be quite a ſtranger in theſe
" parts not to have heard of her. The
" old, the young—every one breathes out
" a bleſſing on her. Laſt Sunday fortnight
" — I ſhall never forget it — ſhe went to
" our

" our parish church for the last time.—
" The whole village was there. Not an
" eye was dry. We knew it was the last
" time. We all loved her. Some remem-
" bered the birth of her father, some his
" wedding, some of us knew the family
" for many years back, some remembered
" the day she was born, all of us knew
" —for all of us had received marks of
" her generous benevolence and charity."
" Oh!" continued the old man, taking out the half guinea, and wiping away the fast-dropping tear, " still does the same
" nobleness of heart remain, even now that
" she has so little to give. Blessings on
" that heart!—yet I wish it had been less.
" If it had been a halfpenny I would never
" have parted with it. But I must be
" poorer than I am even now, before I can
" break this." Again he impressed a kiss upon the piece of gold, and again returned it with a sigh to his pocket.

His apoſtrophe cauſed a ſympathetic tear to trickle down the cheek of his companion, which the old man perceiving, he apologiſed for diſtreſſing him, but declared he could not help crying if the greateſt lord in the land had been preſent. The young ſtranger ſmiled through the gliſtening tear, and told him he ſtood much indebted to him for awakening ſome of the moſt painfully pleaſing feelings he had ever experienced. And finding that the garrulity of age muſt be indulged, ſuffered the old man to proceed in his own way.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

A Retroſpect.

"I SAID," continued he, "that ſome "of us remembered the family many years "back. *I* am of that number. I was for- "merly a domeſtic in the caſtle. My el- "deſt daughter ſuckled his honour, her "father; and the milk of her child nou- "riſhed that ſweet creature of whom you "enquire—ſo that if it was not too bold "for ſuch a poor man, I might ſay, She "is part of myſelf." A bluſh of ſhame "for his preſumption roſe in his aged "cheeks, though it was plain to ſee he "felt pride in the idea."

"AND ſhe receives honour from the "derivation," cried the ſtranger. The

old man, not ſeeming to underſtand him, went on.

" WHAT rejoicing there was at the " caſtle when his honour was born, and I " believe my daughter was envied by half " the pariſh for being promoted to the " office of his nurſe. And a ſweet babe it " was! The dear young lady is the per- " fect image of him, both inſide and out. " Poor gentleman! But I muſt go on " ſtrait forward or I ſhall never have done. " And I ſhall have a weary walk of it " home. I thought nothing of the way " hither, becauſe I hoped once more to ſee " my landlady. I ſhall never call her any " thing elſe."

" BUT you ſhall not walk," ſaid the courteous ſtranger, " Come, get on my " horſe, he is very gentle, I will lead him, " and you ſhall purſue your relation as we " go on to your dwelling. You have a

" family

" family no doubt. I ſhall delight to ſee
" the deſcendants of ſo good a man."

A LOOK of aſtoniſhment was all the anſwer the old man could for ſome time give. It was a look of recollection likewiſe, or rather an attempt to recogniſe ſome one. " Good God !" at laſt exclaimed he, preſſing his hands together over his ſhovel, " ſurely you muſt be one of the ſame fa-
" mily ? ſuch affability ! ſuch goodneſs !
" and in ſo young a gentleman to a poor
" old man ! You ſeem ſo like my dear
" landlady that one would think you were
" made for each other."

" WOULD to heaven I had been !" cried the ſtranger, lifting up his eyes in a rapture ; but in a moment recollecting himſelf—" Come, my old friend," ſaid he, " mount, I dare ſay your good wife or
" children are expecting you home. I will
" for once enjoy the pleaſure of a cottage
" ſcene, often much happier than thoſe of
" palaces !"

" palaces !" So ſaying he aſſiſted the old man, who made a thouſand apologies for the trouble he gave, to get on the horſe, and walking ſlowly by the ſide requeſted the ancient hiſtorian to purſue his narrative.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

The Ride.

" THE old 'ſquire, grandfather to my " young lady, and for whom ſhe is in " mourning, had another ſon born the " next year, but ſurely no two men were " ever more different; not ſo much in " their perſons as their diſpoſitions. The " one ſeemed to inherit all the virtues that " could do honour to mankind, while all " the vices of human nature centered in " the other. Theſe are the very words our " good Rector made uſe of one day when " he ſpoke of them—and I ſhall never " forget them—for almoſt every action, as " he ſaid, of both their lives, plainly " ſhewed the ſources from whence they " ſprung. Yet their father was equally

" indulgent

" indulgent to both, making no difference
" in their education, and intending to leave
" a fortune to this, his younger ſon, to
" enable him to live without any employ-
" ment. He had the art to conceal the
" badneſs of his heart from his father and
" brother, but his domeſtics, and even the
" dogs and cats felt the effects of it.
" 'Squire Henry had the love and good
" word of every body. 'Squire Richard
" was feared and ſecretly hated.

" THE late Rector of the pariſh, who
" had been a fellow collegian of the old
" 'ſquire's, was appointed to inſtruct them
" in learning, which he did till they were
" ſent to Oxford: and from thence they
" went to travel in foreign parts. Their
" diſpoſitions grew up with them. 'Squire
" Henry found his power, as well as his
" deſire increaſed for doing good; while
" his brother was continually getting into
" ſome ſcrape, and doing acts of violence
" and offence.

" DURING

" During their abſence our worthy
" Doctor died, leaving one only child, a
" daughter, to whom he intreated old
" 'Squire Hanbury to be the guardian.
" Both he and his lady loved her as their
" own and took her directly to their houſe,
" ſoothing her ſorrow for the loſs of her
" excellent father, who might be called
" the father of his flock.

" About the time Miſs Elwood came of
" age, our young gentlemen returned from
" their travels. There ſeemed to be a
" double occaſion of joy, and Mr. Han-
" bury gave a grand entertainment to the
" whole country. There was rare doings!
" ſuch feaſting and dancing! every one
" partook of the good things. There was
" not a heavy heart in the whole village
" if you would have given a guinea for
" one. Well, it ſo happened that both
" the young men fell violently in love
" with their father's ward. It cannot be
" wondered at, for, except our dear young

" lady,

" lady, I do not ſuppoſe ſhe could be
" matched for beauty in this county or
" the next to it. Mr. Richard, though but
" a younger brother, thought he might do
" better in marriage, as Miſs Elwood had
" but a ſmall fortune; ſo he reſolved to
" try his chance with her in an eaſier way,
" but maſked his intention by a ſhew of
" the utmoſt reſpect, at the ſame time
" uſing every means to enſnare her affec-
" tions. She was ſo good and virtuous a
" lady, having been brought up by the
" beſt of parents, and inſtructed in every
" thing right, that I doubt not ſhe would
" have been able to withſtand all his
" temptations, without having her breaſt
" guarded by the tendereſt affection for
" his eldeſt brother, who perceiving the
" love his father bore her, determined to
" make him the confidant of his paſſion,
" relying on his known indulgence towards
" himſelf, and particularly for his charm-
" ing ward. While he was deliberating
" how to diſcover his attachment to his
" father,

" father, Richard was every moment tor-
" menting Miſs Elwood with his diſagree-
" able addreſſes. Her repulſes, her ſcorn,
" her threats of informing his father with
" his views, which even with all his arti-
" fice he could not long conceal from her
" penetrating eyes, availed her nothing.
" He ſwore he would obtain her, or periſh
" in the attempt. The honeſt and ho-
" nourable declaration, however, of Henry
" put a ſtop to his perſecution. 'Squire
" Hanbury conſented to an union on
" which the happineſs of his ſon depended,
" and every body rejoiced at the proſpect.
" Even Mr. Richard pretended to make a
" merit of ſacrificing his hopes to his bro-
" ther's more favoured propoſal, and Miſs
" Ellwood, deceived by his appearance of
" penitence for the inſult he had offered,
" preſerved his ſecret inviolable. Nothing
" but pleaſure now reigned at Hanbury-
" Caſtle. I was the happy witneſs of it,
" being at that time employed as under
" gardener."

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

The Halt.

"THERE, ſir," cried the old man, making a full ſtop, and pointing with his hand to an eminence ſkirted with fine woodland, juſt above which there appeared the turrets of a large building in antique taſte, and which the now declining ſun gilded with its parting rays—"There is "Hanbury Caſtle. Never did my eyes ſee "it but my heart ſent up a prayer to heaven "for its worthy poſſeſſors! Alas!" added "he, I can do ſo no longer. I warrant how "my poor young lady ſighed as ſhe paſſed "the end of the wood, where a noble view "of the building, park and lakes preſent "themſelves in their fulleſt beauty. Yes, "although ſhe loved riches but as they

"afforded

" afforded her means of making others " happy, ſhe muſt ſeverely feel the loſs of " ſuch an immenſe fortune. And to loſe " it in ſuch a manner too!" The traveller would have gladly enquired the means of her privation, but as loquacity ſeemed particularly the turn of his old companion, he thought it better to acquieſce ſilently to his peculiar manner of telling the ſtory, as he felt his intereſt in it ſtill increaſed by the little he had already heard. After a few more obſervations and animadverſions, the old man reſumed the thread of his narrative, though he ſtill continued on the ſame ſpot, looking at the caſtle, and the ſtranger leaning with his arm over the horſe's neck, with his eyes rivetted on the honeſt artleſs face of the narrator.

" Some months after the wedding had " taken place the happineſs of the family " received great addition from its being " known that young Madam Hanbury " was

" was breeding. I am ſure, I believe I
" may ſafely ſay, the whole neighbour-
" hood rejoiced at the news. But all their
" felicity was doomed to be overthrown
" by the vileſt of human beings. One
" night this wicked wretch contrived by
" the aſſiſtance of a ſervant of his own,
" not one of our county—I hope he could
" not have found any man in it capable of
" doing ſo bad an action, though to be
" certain he did not know to what baſe
" ends his maſter carried his intentions.
" But as I was ſaying, one night he drove
" two of Mr. Henry's hunters over the
" fence into the garden, and the horſes
" being frightened ran wildly about
" among the curious ſhrubs and American
" plants, of which the old lady was parti-
" cularly fond. His next buſineſs was to
" alarm his brother, who immediately roſe,
" with all the men ſervants, to endeavour
" to catch the horſes and prevent their
" doing further miſchief. Thus far his
" ſcheme ſucceeded. He pretended to his

" brother

" brother to be very much indiſpoſed, who " kindly intreated him not to remain in the " night air, for it was very cold, but go to " bed. This monſter of iniquity and impiety " went immediately to his ſiſter-in-law's " chamber. She had been awakened by " her huſband's leaving the bed, and felt " not the leaſt alarm on hearing the ſound " of a man's footſtep, concluding it to be " him.

" She aſked if he had ſecured the horſes " already, to which queſtion he made no " anſwer, but went to the chimney, where " ſtood a lamp. Happily for her, the " curtain happened to be a little open, and " juſt as he extinguiſhed the light as if by " accident, ſhe had a glimpſe of his perſon. " She ſhrieked out, and leaped out of the " bed; providentially a cloſet ſtood open, " which ſhe ruſhed into and ſecured the " door, before the vile wretch, (not know- " ing the ſituation of the room, being quite " dark) could prevent her. She ſtill conti-

" nued

" nued ſcreaming for aſſiſtance. Some of
" the maids heard her, but knowing all the
" men ſervants were out of the houſe, were
" fearful of venturing down, leſt there
" ſhould be thieves, and the old lady and
" gentleman ſlept in a different wing, ſo
" conſequently could not be within the
" ſound of her voice. Richard uſed every
" intreaty to urge her to open the door,
" which when he found fail, he thought
" it moſt prudent to retire to his own
" chamber to meditate on the beſt excuſe
" for his behaviour. At laſt the maids
" muſtered up courage enough to go three
" together into their miſtreſs's room. Her
" voice led them to the cloſet, but ſhe was
" too much terrified to open the door to
" them. In a ſhort time Mr. Henry re-
" turned, and was informed by one of the
" maids of this extraordinary circumſtance,
" at leaſt as much as they knew them-
" ſelves, which did not amount to any
" thing ſatisfactory. The ſun juſt at this
" moment gliſtens in the windows of the

" very

" very closet, I know every inch of the " house, but if you please, sir, we will now " jog on; my poor dame with our grand- " children will be looking for me; they " will wonder what has kept me so late, " for I did not tell them where I was " coming; if I had, the whole jag of them " had been at my heels; so as I could not " afford to lose a whole day, I made an " exchange with a poor neighbour, who " is employed in road mending." Saying which, he gave the bridle of the horse a gentle stroke, and forward they proceeded all together.

CHAP. VI.

The Ride continued.

" THE well-known and beloved voice
" of Henry was preſently acknowledged
" by the terrified lady.—She haſtily opened
" the door, flew into her huſband's arms,
" and fainted quite away. It was long
" before ſhe recovered to the uſe of her
" ſenſes, and then repeated fits and every
" ſymptom of abortion, gave the whole
" family the utmoſt alarm for her life; no
" doubt the wretch who had occaſioned
" all this horrid miſchief, hoped her ſpeedy
" death would prevent the diſcovery of his
" baſe attempt. All the concern he ſhewed
" on the matter, was attributed to the af-
" fection he had for his dear brother and
" ſiſter, as he hypocritically ſtiled them.
However,

" However, the poor lady declared every
" article of the affair to her mother-in-law
" and huſband; what a rage was the latter
" in! they all thought he would certainly
" have killed Mr. Richard, if he had been
" allowed to ſee him. The old 'ſquire wrote
" a few lines to him, ordering him to quit
" the caſtle for ever, and never dare to ap-
" pear within ſight of it, at the ſame time
" telling him, altho' he renounced him as a
" ſon, he would yet make ſuch a proviſion
" for him, as with his talents and educa-
" tion might procure him a maintenance.
" He accompanied this mandate with an
" order on his banker for five thouſand
" pounds, and concluded by ſaying, he
" had now done with him for ever, and
" hoped never to hear his name mentioned.
" The ſhock of this wicked and infernal
" attempt, had ſuch an effect on the old
" lady, that it ſpeedily carried her to the
" grave, from which young Madam Han-
" bury was with difficulty reſtored. Thus
" did the innocent ſuffer, while the har-

" dened wretch bore his disgrace with the
" utmost unconcern; all the sorrow he
" expressed was, that he had not succeed-
" ed in his plan, according to his wishes.

" It was a long time before tranquility
" was restored to the castle; the death of
" the old lady, and the ill health of the
" young one, broke in upon every scheme
" of happiness. Time, however, brings
" things about, and again Mrs. Hanbury
" gave signs of an increase to the family,
" after an interval of three years, when she
" was advanced pretty forward in her preg-
" nancy, I well remember the day—oh! is
" it possible it should ever be forgotten by
" any one? It was in the early part of the
" shooting season, a diversion Mr. Henry
" was very fond of. He had as usual
" been out all the morning, and after
" dinner, being rather fatigued by extra-
" ordinary exercise, retired into his study,
" which he often did, and would take a
" book, and sometimes drop asleep in his

arm

" arm chair. As I have been working in
" the garden, I have ſeen him do ſo many
" a time. That day I was employed in
" the melon ground at ſome diſtance from
" the houſe, ſo that I knew nothing of
" what had happened, till I ſaw ſome of
" the ſervants running about in a diſtrac-
" ted manner, crying out, Mr. Henry
" had ſhot himſelf. I thought I ſhould
" have died on the ſpot, what he! a man
" ſo good! of ſo chearful and even a tem-
" per! a religious man! of ſuch a fortune
" in expectancy, bleſſed with a wife he
" adored, who was on the point of bring-
" ing him an heir! it cannot, cannot be; I
" would not, I could not believe it. Alas!
" it was too true, at leaſt that the poor
" dear gentleman was dead. It is hard to
" judge; but yet when we put all things
" together; well, well, it does not ſignify;
" the jury on the coroner's inqueſt, made
" it out he had ſhot himſelf. He was
" found leaning back in the chair, rather
" hanging on one ſide; the piſtol ball en-

" tered at one temple, and came out at
" the cheek bone on the other ſide. It
" was one of his own piſtols, taken down
" for the purpoſe from the ſtand of arms
" over the chimney. He had been read-
" ing, for a book laid open on the deſk,
" with a penknife, ſuch as is uſual in gen-
" tlemens' ſtudies, acroſs the book, as if to
" mark the place. It was a book on ſome
" moral ſubject, but not the leaſt gloomy;
" one of the ſtudy windows was up, which
" indeed I had remarked to be ſo all the
" day. Ill news flies apace; poor Mrs.
" Hanbury heard of it in the moſt abrupt
" manner, for every one felt ſo much for
" themſelves, they could not think of ſoft-
" ening the ſtory to any body. Nothing
" could perſuade the dear unhappy lady
" that her Henry, her loved Henry, as
" ſhe called him, had been guilty of ſo
" raſh an action. She flew to the lifeleſs
" body, and claſping it in her arms, called
" for vengeance on his murderer; there
" was but one in the world who could

" bear

" bear him ill-will; and none but ſuch a " wretch, who could meditate an attempt " to inceſt, could murder ſo good a man; " there were many perſons, I believe, who " thought as the poor lady did; but no " proof could be given that he was even " in England; he had married, ran out " his fortune and went to America. No " one knew what had become of him; but " theſe were her thoughts till her dying " day, which happened when the ſweet " young lady you ſaw was three days old; " and juſt ſix weeks from the dreadful ac- " cident I have related.

" We all thought the old gentleman " would have followed them to the grave, " and nothing I believe but the fervent " recommendation of his darling daughter, " to tranſmit all the love he had borne " the unfortunate parents to the little or- " phan, could have reconciled him to the " thoughts of taking any care of himſelf; " I have heard him ſay as much a hundred " times."

THEY were now come in ſight of the old man's peaceful dwelling; a neat little cottage, ſurrounded with three or four others of the ſame kind, and which were occupied by his deſcendants, who all flocked out to meet the groupe, full of ſurprize and enquiry, which however he ſatisfied after his prolix manner, and introduced the ſtrange gentleman to them; who with the utmoſt gentleneſs and good-nature, accepted a ſeat at the door, the evening being uncommonly fine, partook of the brown loaf and drank their healths in a bowl of new milk.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

The Cottagers.

"ALAS the day!" cried they, almoſt with one voice, "why did you not let us "know that our dear lady was to go from "Doctor Barnard's; we would all have "gone to have ſeen the laſt of our excel-"lent benefactreſs?"——"I knew you "would," replied the old man, "and "therefore I deceived you as to the time; "you remember how the poor lady was "diſtreſſed when ſhe went to church, by "the grateful, but too clamarous grief of "the villagers?—I well knew, though my "heart was burſting, that I could reſtrain "my ſorrow within decent bounds."—— "Yes!" cried one of his grand-daughters, the one, who had been her nurſe; "yes!

" I think I ſee her at this moment; do " you not remember," ſaid ſhe, turning and addreſſing herſelf to the whole party, " with what a ſweet look and action of her " pretty white hand, ſhe intreated us to " leave her.—I ſhall never forget her voice " when ſhe ſaid, heaven would yet raiſe us " up friends, as able as ſhe once was to " aſſiſt us in getting an honeſt livelihood; " we all loved her, ſir," ſhe added—wiping her eyes with her apron, " but for myſelf, " *I* adored her.—I had the honour of being " her wet nurſe.—In the church-yard I " could not help it, I dropt down on my " knee and begged to kiſs her hand.—My " dear nurſe, ſaid ſhe, bending down, I " owe you more than that, and ſhe con- " deſcended to kiſs me. Her goodneſs " almoſt overpowered me. I aſk pardon, " ſir; I did not mean to afflict you after " this manner; but poor folks as we are, " we can ſhow our gratitude only by our " tears. She had a tear for every one's " diſtreſs, and a hand bountiful to beſtow."

Her

Her grief now almoſt choaked her, and the gentleman roſe to conceal his emotions.

In a few minutes they reſumed their places, and the huſband of the laſt ſpeaker, ſaid to the old man, "we begin to find "the difference already, for the ſteward "has been from the caſtle to ſtop our little "building; ſo my daughter muſt give up "her long wiſhed-for hope of being united "to her couſin John, next birth-day of our "honoured young lady, and ſettling "amongſt us; we were all hard at work, "every hand employed; but the voice of "the ſteward obliged us to ſtrike directly, "for he told us in few words, his maſter "would have no more cottages built; and "knew not whether he ſhould not remove "theſe, as they were too much in view of "the caſtle." "The very reaſon," interrupted the old man, "that they were "built on this ſpot—O dear bleſſed Miſs "Hanbury, how do we miſs you!—How "fond was ſhe of looking over this little

" glade, of turning the pretty rivulet, that " it might water our little mead.—Here " my good old neighbour, ſhe ſaid; here I " will have the pleaſure of ſeeing you like " the ancient patriarch ſurrounded with " your childrens' children; ye ſhall never " be moleſted.—This ſweet receſs for vir- " tuous poverty ſhall be yours."—Dear " lady! ſhe thought it was her's to be- " ſtow," cried her nurſe, " now muſt we " work early and late, to make up the de- " manded ſum againſt the quarter day."

" CANNOT it be purchaſed," ſaid the ſtranger—" do, my worthy friend, enquire " of the ſteward if ſuch a thing is poſſible, " tell him you have a friend who will rea- " dily advance a reaſonable price for this " little domain.—How infinitely happy " ſhall I be, if I can fix you here in peace- " ful ſecurity!"

THE cottagers looked all aſtoniſhment, their tongues all at once bore teſtimony to their

their grateful feelings. "Yet," cried one of them, "have we not before experienced "the utmoſt kindneſs from the great and "wealthy? But this is a ſtranger!"

He ſtopped the effuſions of their gratitude by earneſtly requeſting them to loſe no time in negociating this buſineſs with the ſteward; when, looking at his watch, he told them he would call on them at noon the next day, and hoped to find the ſteward there in a diſpoſition to treat with him. What looſe ſilver he had, he diſtributed among the younger branches of the harmleſs ſociety, and gave five guineas to the old man, with a hearty ſhake by the hand, and aſſuring him he ſhould be impatient to learn from him, how the amiable and lovely Miſs Hanbury had been diſpoſſeſſed of her fortune; then mounting his horſe, wiſhed them a good evening, and galloped out of ſight in a moment.

"He is an angel from heaven!" exclaimed the old woman, who ſat in a wicker chair, and whoſe knitting had been ſuſpended while the ſtranger was preſent. "He is as beautiful as one," ſaid one of the girls. "And how ſweetly his hand-"kerchief ſmelt when he wiped away a "tear that hung on his cheek like a dew-"drop on a roſe." "Who is he?" they aſked. The old man related their firſt acquaintance, and remarked that the prayers of the righteous would be heard, and that the one which proceeded from the undefiled lips of their honoured lady had not returned into her own boſom, but that heaven had wonderfully proved its power by throwing this benevolent ſtranger, who ſeemed as good as he was handſome, in their way. "Let us then, my "beloved children," ſaid he, addreſſing his numerous deſcendants, "let us *hold* "*faſt our integrity*, as we read in holy Job, "and remember the Royal Pſalmiſt ſays, "*never did I ſee the righteous forſaken, or* "*his ſeed begging bread.*" THEN,

THEN, bleſſing and praiſing with thankful hearts the Almighty Diſpenſer of all bounty, they peacefully retired to reſt, with their boſoms filled with comfort, which procured them ſuch refreſhing ſlumbers as enabled them to riſe with the early dawn to purſue their ſeveral occupations, and do their duty in that ſtate of life to which it had pleaſed God to call them.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

A Negociation.

PRECISELY at one o'clock the next day the benevolent ſtranger joined the congreſs. The ſteward was there, but rather from a motive of curioſity to ſee who this generous man could be, than a hope that ſo agreeable a buſineſs could be ſettled; for he poſſeſſed great good nature, and had been accuſtomed ſo long to be the diſtributer of Miſs Hanbury's charities, that his heart naturally took its tone from her's; he had lived in the family many years, was a man of ſome education, and was reſpected by the tenants and peaſantry in general. He had ventured to open the matter to his new maſter, amongſt the catalogue of whoſe *virtues* avarice was written

written in large characters. He told him if he made a good bargain, he ſhould wave his deſign of depopulating the glade. When this was made known to the ſtranger, he ſaid, he meant not to adminiſter to the vice of any man; but bid the ſteward put a fair valuation on the ground and ſeveral tenements which he would abide by. The ſteward, like an able penman, ſtuck a little inkhorn in his button hole, and drew up an eſtimate, which he thought juſt between man and man, and which copying and giving the ſtranger, ſaid he would ſhew the other paper to his maſter, and would let him have the reſult of his reſolution as ſoon as poſſible; but the gentleman feeling all the poor inhabitants of the glade, would ſuffer from ſuſpenſe and *hope deferred*, begged to have a moment's private conference with the ſteward; they walked aſide together, where he diſcloſed to him his name and ſtation in life, which the poor people judged muſt be a 'ſquire at leaſt, as the ſteward bowed lower than uſual;

uſual; however, as we ſhall recogniſe this ſtranger in ſome future day, it is of little conſequence now to be told who or what he was. There was, to be ſure, ſomething ſingular in his character; for he had more pleaſure in throwing away his money in the fooliſh attempt of beſtowing happineſs on odd mortals, the mere fag end of mankind, than in gaming, hore-racing, or demireps: ſo that the low bow of the ſteward might be equivocal; it might be to the *goodneſs* rather than to the *greatneſs* of the man the obeiſance was made to.

It has been obſerved the ſteward was a man of ſome education, ſo that the ſtranger gained more information from him in half an hour, reſpecting the hiſtory of the caſtle, than from the old cottager in ſix; yet ſtill ſomehow he was better pleaſed with the artleſs, though round-about tale, as he related it, than with the more conciſe but laboured language of the former —this was another ſingular *trait* in the young man's portrait.

In

In the cottage hung a little drawing of the plan and elevations of the different buildings, done by the hand of Arpasia; the neatness of the stile had attracted the eye of the stranger; it was taken down. He was himself a draughtsman, and taking out his pocket-book he copied it with exactness; the place was now likely to be his own; it had yet greater merit with him, though one would think he could hardly be sensible of it; it had belonged to, and was the execution of a woman, who had made a deeper impression on his mind than any one of her sex had ever done.

He asked the old man if he had parted with the half guinea.—"No," cried he, "would your honour wish to have it?" How is it possible, thought the stranger, that so poor and ignorant a cottager should read my heart; he forgot that nature writes a legible hand, and that the uncorrupted poor are her children; he knew not, perhaps, that it is almost the only lan-

guage

guage they underſtand; and he certainly knew not, that in his own face could be read every movement of his ſoul.

After a little heſitation, he owned he ſhould like to have it; and pulling out his pocket-book once more, took from it a ten pound bank note, which he forced the old man to accept. On examining the piece of money, he found it was a proof half guinea, and on mentioning the year of coinage, the old man cried out, It was that in which ſhe was born. The value roſe fifty per cent. directly in the eſtimation of the ſtranger; the leaf of the pocket-book, on which the drawing had been made, was ſeparated from the reſt, the half guinea folded neatly up in it, and ſafely depoſited in that part of the book from whence the bank note had been taken.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

The Repaſt.

THE ſteward was ſome time in going and returning from the Caſtle, where he was to learn his maſter's final determination. Whatever magic there was in the name given in by the ſteward as belonging to the purchaſer cannot be known, as Mr. Richard Hanbury could always keep his own thoughts to himſelf; but he made little or no objection to the valuation fixed on, and ſigned his part of the agreement, with which Benjamin Tomkins trotted away to the cottage, with all due expedition.

THIS arrangement however could not be made in a minute, and the old man, with the glow of hoſpitality kindled in his boſom,

boſom, lamented he had nothing fit for his honour to partake of, himſelf and progeny having dined on ſome cold cabbage and pickled pork at twelve, and he was ſadly afraid his honour would be hunger-ſtarved, it now being, as he ſaw by the ſun-dial in the midſt of the green, almoſt four o'clock. His honour aſſured him, he as little thought of eating as if he had not been uſed to it; but as the idea was ſtarted, and he allowed it no bad one, he would thank him for two or three eggs and ſome raſhers of his pork. All was helter ſkelter in an inſtant; one was diſpatched to bring the neweſt and the cleareſt looking eggs, another cut ſome ſlices from the middle of a fine piece of pork. In ſhort, there was as many cooks as there were perſons in the cottage, and in a little time the diſh was ſmoaking on the well-rubbed oaken table, over which they ſpread a bit of clean cloth, and our young man fell to with a good appetite, and reliſhed his homely meal and cup of ale, with as great gout, as ever he had

veniſon and claret at Weltjie's. But one would rather think he had not been a member of that right honourable ſet; and ſhould he in future meditate to be admitted, he would chance to be black-balled, when it is known, that he attempted not the leaſt gallantry towards his pretty waiter, though no other than the girl who wanted to be married on Arpaſia's birth-day to her couſin John, and whoſe black eyes and blooming cheeks might have kindled what thoſe gentlemen call love, in the breaſt of a man who did not appear above three or four and twenty. He aſked her indeed on what day Miſs Hanbury was born, and the girl, with a curtſey and a bluſh, replied the 23d of October. She bluſhed, perhaps, becauſe ſhe might recollect her father's ſaying, ſhe had hoped to be married on that day. He wiſhed her happy, and gave her a guinea to purchaſe ſome ribbons; but offered not to repay himſelf with a kiſs. How would this ſtory have told againſt him!

His dinner diſpatched, he ſoon diſpatched likewiſe his buſineſs with Mr. Tomkins, by ſigning the paper, and giving a draft for the purchaſe-money on Drummond.

He aſked the ſteward, if he knew the preſent reſidence of Miſs Hanbury; of which however he either was, or affected to be ignorant; but the old cottager eagerly cried out, he knew where ſhe was gone; for he had heard her ſay ſhe meant to go to London. Both the ſtranger and Tomkins ſmiled at the old man's ſimplicity; and the former requeſted Mr. Tomkins to accept of the ſtewardſhip of his new purchaſe. "I believe," he replied, "I ſhall "ſoon have little elſe to do, for I by no "means like the ſetting off at the Caſtle. "You may be happy, Maſter Greenwood," added he, addreſſing himſelf to the old man, "that you have exchanged land-"lords. How ſhall I have the heart to "drive the poor man's cattle for defi-

"ciency

" ciency of rent, when perhaps bad wea-
" ther or illneſs may have been the real
" and only cauſe? No, no, Mr. Richard
" Hanbury muſt look out for another
" ſteward. Benjamin Tomkins would
" have ſerved his predeceſſors for nothing;
" but with all his wealth, he cannot hire
" me to do the ſervice he requires."

THE benevolence however of the ſtranger ſhewed itſelf in his urging ſo gentle a hearted ſteward to remain with his rigorous maſter, as he would ſoften the aſperity which another might exerciſe againſt the poor; and at laſt reconciling Tomkins to the idea of the good he might be the means of doing to his fellow creatures, and ſettling what the rent of each cottage ſhould be—no more than a grain of barley each, for ſeven years, and pointing out the improvements he wiſhed made; he ſhook each of the worthy inhabitants by the hand and followed with their bleſſings, he mounted his horſe and accompanied Mr. Tomkins

round by the caſtle, to have a view of a place that gave birth to, and was long thought the property of Arpaſia.

It was in this ride that the ſteward opened his mind to his new maſter, and gave him a long detail of the family of the Hanburys; their diſcourſe brought them to the caſtle, which was a venerable pile of building, though but little of the original (formerly belonging to one of the ancient barons,) was now remaining. It was however an object which could not fail to intereſt one on whom Arpaſia had made an impreſſion; and the converſation of Tomkins had not ſerved to leſſen that impreſſion —It was one continued eulogium—the reader ſhall not loſe the benefit of the diſcourſe, although it will be taken out of Tomkins's hands—It will be neceſſary to return to the period where Maſter Greenwood left off, the death of Mrs. Hanbury, firſt premiſing the ſtranger took leave of Tomkins, ſtill more convinced that ſome

vile

vile treachery had been practiſed againſt Arpaſia, and fully reſolved to make it his buſineſs, if poſſible, to detect it. There ſeemed ſome degree of knight errantry in this determination, and it would appear ſtill more ſo, if his ſituation was known. He could not avoid making this remark within himſelf, "but then," added he, with a glow of ſelf-approbation, "at leaſt "it muſt be allowed I am wholly diſinter-"eſted in my view of ſerving this lovely "unfortunate."

CHAP. X.

Memoirs of a Villain.

IT will however be clearing up matters better, by reverting back to a ſtill later period, namely, the detection of the horrid plot which Richard Hanbury attempted againſt the eternal peace of his brother and family.

NOTWITHSTANDING the eaſe with which he ſeemingly reſigned his pretenſions to Miſs Ellwood's heart, in honour of his more fortunate elder brother, he from that moment cheriſhed the moſt rooted hatred for him and his father, for ſo readily conſenting to a marriage that entirely militated againſt his intereſt and inclinations—He loved Miſs Ellwood to diſtraction—but it

was

was that kind of love that centered ſolely in his own gratifications—he ſought to weaken his attachment by giving way to indiſcriminate amours; but ſuch exceſſes rendering his heart more vicious, the moſt chaſte endearments of his brother and ſiſter, threw him into agonies whenever he was witneſs of them—His paſſions being all ſenſual, actually almoſt conſumed him—To the deed he meditated, he was equally ſtimulated by love and revenge—The extreme depravity of his mind rendered him callous to the diſtreſs he ſhould occaſion—he looked no further than preſent enjoyment—nor would he ſuffer reflection to be a drawback on his pleaſures; for a moment's reflection might have taught him how inadequate were the means to the end propoſed; for all his hopes of ſucceſs reſted on that ſingle one of the hapleſs victim of his unwarrantable paſſion, miſtaking him for her huſband—and under that idea beſtowing careſſes, which on her part would be innocent, but which would plunge him into the moſt

ahorred of ſin—ſo little did he know of the purity of a rational affection, that he thought he ſhould effectually ſubdue the tumults of deſire, could he once attain this forbidden pleaſure—There might be another advantage—He knew his ſiſter-in-law was pregnant—ſhould ſhe then make the diſcovery—ſhame, he hoped, would keep her ſilent—but the effects might deſtroy her child—and delicacy on her ſide would probably prevent any future intercourſe between her and her huſband—ſo that which ever way he turned it in his mind, he could ſee nothing but that which he ſhould not be a gainer by. It is thus the arch-deceiver deludes the wicked, leading them by falſe views to thoſe very precipices and pits which they fancy they are avoiding—The guardian-angel of the amiable Mrs. Hanbury, however, interpoſed to ſave her from diſtruction, in the exact manner old Greenwood before related—The atrocious wickedneſs of Richard was repaid, as he likewiſe ſaid, by being turned out of the houſe, without

without being ſeen by any of the family. Chagrin and diſappointed paſſion, with the total overthrow of all his future hopes, made him for ſome time regardleſs of every conſequence—at leaſt, ſelf always being the *primum mobile* with him, he thought it neceſſary to take ſome meaſures of ſecuring the patrimony beſtowed on him by his enraged father, leaſt, from the caprice of age, he might countermand the inſtructions he had given the banker—Accordingly he betook himſelf to London—told an artful tale to him, and received the money in notes.

Anguish of heart for the detection of his wickedneſs, not remorſe or penitence, tore his boſom by a thouſand conflicting paſſions—Under the appearance of tranquility, he carried the moſt corroding cares—Judging his family would, as much as they could, prevent ſuch a ſtory getting abroad, and grounding his hopes on his father never having given a hint to the banker, who, with his attorney, was all

the correſpondents old Mr. Hanbury had in London; he frequently viſited each of theſe gentlemen, and from their knowledge of the reſpectability of the Hanburys in Worceſterſhire, joined to a very good perſon and the moſt inſinuating addreſs, with the utmoſt command of features, he gained ſo much upon them, that by their recommendations he obtained footing in the houſes of many perſons of faſhion—Maſter of diſſimulation, in as great a degree as if he had ſtudied under Lord Cheſterfield, he never ſaw a man or woman, from whom he did not hope, and commonly did gain ſome advantage to himſelf—This outward deportment was all eaſe and gaiety—a readineſs to oblige—a perfect diſintereſted diſregard of himſelf, gained him the hearts of the younger part of mankind; while a ſedulous attention to the whims and caprices of age, made him equally the darling with them—He found relief from the torments of guilty deſires unſubdued by the variety of company he now mixed with—the looſe

women,

women, with whom he ſecretly indulged, baniſhed the image of his former impious paſſion from his heart, and hatred ſucceeded—The death of his mother gave him little concern—he deteſted the whole race of the Hanburys, and wiſhed their extinction—and in his heart vowed revenge for the injuries he had been prevented doing them.

THERE was one family with whom he was more particularly acquainted, and with whom he had ſome intention of uniting himſelf, by a marriage with a beautiful young girl, on whoſe heart he had already made ſome impreſſion. Her fortune, tho' not large, would however be a great acquiſition to his own—and the incumbrance of a wife he eaſily reconciled to himſelf, as he found his conſtitution began to receive material injury from his illicit and various engagements—Every individual of the family of Arlington found ſomething to like in him—The young men ſaw ſpirit, honour,

and bravery in their agreeable and pleaſant companion—The young lady beheld a paſſionate adorer, breathing forth the moſt ardent profeſſions with all the delicacy of a firſt attachment, which renders the lover ſtill dearer from the timidity that accompanies every look and action—His heart, his manners were the counterpart of her own—artleſs, undiſguiſed, ardent and ſincere, too much in love to conceal it from the object that inſpired it in his honeſt boſom—and yet too conſcious of his own want of worth to acknowledge it immediately to her father. To this father, he was a man who poſſeſſed a ſolid judgment, a very competent knowledge of the world, and by whoſe application to the law, for he had taken chambers in the Temple, he doubted not would one day make a figure at the bar—He would frequently lament the depravity of the preſent times, launch forth into declamation of the licentious folly of youth, and with a ſigh regret ſome indiſcretions which himſelf had at a very

very early period been drawn into; but thanked heaven, he ſaw his errors in time, before either his health, morals, conſtitution, or fortune had been hurt materially. The mother was ſtill a fine woman, having been married at ſixteen, by the perſuaſion of her parents, who thought they ſhould ſecure their daughter's happineſs, by giving her to a man of probity, honour, and fortune—though more than twice her own age. Reſpect for them, and a certain timidity, prevented her making the leaſt objection to this arrangement, and for ſome years they lived happy enough—Many virtues were not in her compoſition, yet there was nothing reprehenſible in her conduct, and as little meritorious. Infirmities, however, beſetting Mr. Arlington, had long rendered him indifferent to her—ſhe poſſeſſed a warmth of conſtitution, which the penetrating eyes of Richard ſoon obſerved—and indeed (which he did not know) ſhe had been ſuſpected of tranſgreſſing her

marriage vow; though the affair was, for the ſake of the children, huſhed up.

BAD hearts, like heavy bodies, gravitate towards each other—A ſecret ſympathy pointed out the character of Mrs. Arlington to Richard—but he found himſelf, from the knowledge of the parity of their minds, under a double neceſſity of guarding every avenue that might lead to detection—and thus was he conſtrained to act with a greater degree of caution before a woman, who ſeemed inclined to make him advances, than before any of the reſt of her family. In this ſituation was he, when the Arlingtons preſſed him to accompany them to their country ſeat in the North of England, and as it was in the vacation, there could be no excuſe.—Indeed this precious plotter of miſchief readily accepted the invitation—his money would be ſaved, and ſomething might turn out advantageous to his dear ſelf. He was now become ſo good an adept in art and diſſimulation,

lation, that the taſk of deceiving the whole houſe appeared trifling in his eſtimation—He hunted and occaſinally joined in little frolics with young Arlington—talked politics and morality to the father—ſighed, and ſecretly preſſed the hand of the daughter—behaved with profound reſpect, before witneſſes, to the mother; but availed himſelf of a looſer conduct when alone, with ſometimes a regret that Mr. Arlington, whether from indiſpoſition, age, or natural indifference, ſeemed totally unfit for ſo charming a woman—In ſhort, here again was he the dupe of his own vicious inclination. On the one hand was a beautiful young girl of ſeventeen, with a good fortune, if he married with her father's conſent; but a negociation of that ſort would call for ſome explanations which he by no means wiſhed for, and which might for ever ſhut him out, not only of this, but moſt other families.—His ſeducing this innocent and artleſs girl would afford him but little gratification—he prudently drew a picture of the

the conſequences—it was in her power to give him no greater ſenſation of felicity than any other female could—perhaps not ſo much—while the baſeneſs of ruining the only daughter and ſiſter of perſons from whom he had received ſuch unbounded civilities, would fix a ſtigma on his character, which on this outſet in life muſt terminate his career with the utmoſt diſgrace and infamy.—But be not ſo much miſtaken in Richard, as to ſuppoſe he had any feelings of compunction of the crime he ſhould commit, and the unutterable anguiſh he ſhould derive to theſe his good friends: no ſuch matter—He weighed the *pours et le contres*, and he found the latter preponderate.——His villainy had yet only been diſcovered in his own family—and by them had been concealed—but an attempt here would infallibly be blazed abroad—The brothers were men of ſpirit; his heart, like all baſe ones, was cowardly—therefore he ſoon laid this ſcheme aſide, at leaſt for the preſent. The eyes of Mrs. Arlington

Arlington had kindled a flame in his bosom, which those eyes plainly told him she would as readily allay—It was with difficulty he kept his turbulent passions within bounds; but though he loved vice, he yet trembled at the consequence—and kept up the farce of not understanding her for some time, at least as long as suited his own purpose, which was an object he never once lost sight of. He had, however, some conflicts with himself. He was a voluptuary—and Mrs. Arlington just that kind of woman that promised him satisfaction, his attachments to the sex never rising beyond personal attractions—The ready warmth which he saw glow on the cheek, and sparkle in her eyes, if he, by chance, now and then touched her hand, as he played with her at backgammon, or by accident put his foot on hers, evidently shewed her inclinations. One day, notwithstanding his more prudential resolves, she was more than commonly soft and attractive—and the scenes their voluptuous ser-

vices

vices had often painted to their thoughts were now realized—But cold caution made him more circumſpect than ever, and that very caution heightened the guilty raptures of each—for the noble paſſion of love,

" Which ſelf diſdaining ſeeks alone
" To bleſs the dearer object of its ſoul,"

was all unknown to them—Self enjoyment —ſelf-gratification—and ſelf-preſervation, were the principles by which they were mutually actuated. Their meetings, tho' frequent, were ſo diſcreetly managed for detection or ſurprize, even had they been ſuſpected, which was far from the caſe.—Conſummate in hypocriſy, he preſerved the ſame deportment to every body he had from the beginning, except aſſuming more gallant attention to Miſs Arlington, before her mother, which he perſuaded that infamous woman was neceſſary to conceal his real attachment.

CHAP.

CHAP. XI.

Innocence betrayed.

WON by the deceitful appearance of a paſſion, as ardent as ſincere, Matilda Arlington could form but one wiſh, which was, that Mr. Hanbury would avail himſelf of the wonted partiality her father evinced for him, by requeſting his conſent to an union, on which he had ſo often ſworn his more than happineſs depended —Why then this unaccountable ſilence on his part? when it was ſo plain to her that her mother approved of her predilection, and that ſhe likewiſe ſeemed to make no difference in her behaviour between Mr. Hanbury and her own ſons—treating him with that familiarity which was allowable enough, the difference of their age conſidered,

ſidered, and not ſeldom, calling herſelf his mother—Could he mean to triſle with her happineſs, whoſe image never one moment was abſent from his idea?—What could be the reaſon?—Were his circumſtances bad?—No—he had frequently mentioned his being preſumptive heir to a large eſtate, and his profeſſional views were very extenſive—Oh! that ſhe had but a confidant!—one to whom ſhe could open her whole ſoul; for though ſhe loved Mr. Hanbury more than worlds, to him ſhe could not be explicit. Her brothers did not ſeem to think his behaviour particular, at leaſt they had never remarked it to her. Silence then reſted its leaden finger on her lips—but anxiety and diſquiet laid hold on her heart—while with him—while liſtening to him—while viewing him—when her ſoft, mild, modeſt glances could ſteal a view, ſhe was too happy to admit a diſcordant thought—all was happineſs—all was peace and ſecurity. She was certain, he only wanted a favourable opportunity—

To-mor-

To-morrow he was to take a ride with her father—She counted the hours through a reſtleſs night—that day paſſed over—ſomething had happened, which ſhe was certain he meant to ſpeak, but his natural modeſty and diffidence—Oh! could he but ſee himſelf with her eyes! Thus week after week wore away—but ſtill ſhe was far removed from wretchedneſs, if ſhe was not perfectly happy, becauſe ſtill bleſt with his loved ſociety—ſtill ſhe was the object of his tender regard, his impaſſioned aſſiduity, whenever any opportunity offered of ſhewing them unobſerved.

The mother, ſatisfied that the devoir he paid Matilda originated in the motive of concealing their illicit amour, gave him all the opportunity of proſecuting his ſchemes he could wiſh—He found he had a friend in his infamous paramour, who would not ſcruple ſacrificing her daughter's happineſs to ſecure herſelf from detection—and who could ſuſpect her of an intrigue with a man whoſe

whoſe addreſſes to that daughter ſhe encouraged?

A CIRCUMSTANCE now aroſe that filled *her* boſom with diſmay, and made *his* coward heart ſhrink with terror.——She found ſhe ſhould bring a living witneſs of her criminal indulgence—her paſſion for her aſſociate in guilt increaſed from an event which ought to have made her deteſt herſelf, her crime, and him. The dread of loſing him ſuperſeded that of ſhame—He urged her to uſe ſome means to avoid the impending diſgrace—which, however, ſhe would not comply with—but ſatisfied him with aſſuring him, no miſchief or diſtreſs ſhould fall on the man, dearer to her than her own ſoul.

THE vacation was finiſhed—He was under the neceſſity of taking leave. He took a favourable opportunity of informing Matilda, he had opened his heart to her father—that, as he had flattered himſelf,

ſelf, there was no objection made, but that the acquiſition of the family eſtate was not a certain thing; and as his profeſſion required time to make it advantageous, he, Mr. Arlington, could wiſh the marriage poſtponed for ſome time; and that he would not ſeek an intereſt in the heart of his daughter, as entangling her in an engagement might lay the foundation of future uneaſineſs to both—This ſatisfied. The innocent Matilda ſaw his departure with leſs dejection of ſpirits than ſhe feared ſhe ſhould—She now looked forward to an union with a man, who was equally the choice of a father, whom ſhe loved and reſpected, and naturally concluded every branch of the family would concur with a meaſure approved by ſo good a man as Mr. Arlington. The time was fixed for their going up to town after Chriſtmas—ſhe then ſhould have an opportunity of ſeeing him again, as his viſits, ſhe underſtood, were not to be reſtricted, only that ſhe was not to countenance his addreſſes

till

till her father gave conſent—but ſhe might cheriſh his image in her faithful boſom—and ſhe might indulge the dear hope—Hope! 'twas more, 'twas certainty, that in his waking thoughts——his midnight dreams, he ſaw, he heard—he loved none but his Matilda.

CHAP.

CHAP. XII.

Vice triumphant.

IN a few weeks after the return of Richard to his chambers and law ſtudies, Mr. Arlington found himſelf much indiſpoſed —Matilda, who dearly loved him, attended him with the utmoſt aſſiduity, even Mrs. Arlington doubled her diligence, and ſeldom left him—though his diſorder was nothing but a conſtant ſickiſhneſs, a propenſity to ſleep, with a total loſs of appetite. He was ever adverſe to the phyſical tribe. Mrs. Arlington, from policy, perhaps, and Matilda, from ignorance, did not urge the taking of any advice. In this way he continued a fortnight, and then growing much worſe, at the ſtrenuous entreaty of his wife and daughter, he promiſed,

miſed, if he was not better, to ſend to a phyſician the next day—but that proved needleſs—for in the night he breathed his laſt, in the arms of his diſconſolate widow, who would not allow any one to ſit up with her dear, dear Mr. Arlington, beſide herſelf. Notwithſtanding her great grief, ſhe had recollection and fortitude to do every thing proper—She broke the unhappy news to her really afflicted daughter—and, as it is cuſtomary in that part of England to have early funerals, gave directions for the burial with all due haſte. On the Tueſday he died, on Friday evening, in all "the pomp and circumſtance "of ſhew," was John Arlington, eſq; depoſited in the family vault. It was not till ſome days after the burial that her ſons could arrive from Oxford, whither they had gone when they left the North—and by ſome miſtake of the poſt, ſo that they had not the letter ſo ſoon as they ought (according to the date) by three days—They loved their father, and had been ever indulged

dulged by him, but ſtill more ſo by their mother—the grief they ſaw her expreſs—the mute ſorrow of poor Matilda, called forth their tears and conſolations. The will was opened—the eldeſt of courſe became heir to the eſtate; ten thouſand pounds, with the reverſion of half the mother's jointure, devolved to the younger; and five thouſand pounds now, with five more at the widow's death, was the portion of Miſs Arlington—the jointure was conſiderable, and ſhe had ſeveral thouſands to diſpoſe of *ad libitum*.

The dowager had occaſion to go to London to ſettle her affairs—ſhe meant not to ſtay, but haſten back to her children, who were now all that bound her to this miſerable world, and ſuch like cant; as the ſtay in town would be ſo ſhort, ſhe would not take Matilda with her. A conſolation ſhe had, however, received by a letter from her beloved Hanbury—he lamented the death of Mr Arlington with

all the affection of a dutiful ſon—and entreated, as ſoon as decency would allow, that he might fulfil every relation to her as one—that of being her happy huſband.

WHETHER he really meant as he wrote, requires being as great an adept in the ſcience of deceit as himſelf to develop.—Five thouſand pounds in poſſeſſion was a golden bait—and poſſeſſion had damped the ardor of his paſſion for the mother—beſides, his good genius ſuggeſted, that poſſibly, could he ſeparate her from her family, he might chance to ſucceed with every wiſh, without that galling chain matrimony. Sometimes, indeed, the diſagreeable thought would ariſe, of how Mrs. Arlington was to diſpoſe of her burthen—but he ſoon drove it away—it was more her concern than his—and ſhe had promiſed no harm ſhould come to him.

WHILE his thoughts were thus employed, the widow arrived at her houſe in town.—

He

He ſoon received a ſummons, which he obeyed, though not with that alacrity he had ſome former ones ſhe had ſent him. She knew him well enough to be convinced, that money would outweigh moſt other conſiderations—She informed him of the riches ſhe was in poſſeſſion of, which ſhe was ready to give him a legal claim to, whenever he thought fit. As to the idea of her conſenting to his marriage with her daughter, it never ſunk deeper into her mind, than to cover her own intrigue—and now that ſhe had happily the means of ſhewing her real attachment, it was idle to ſuppoſe ſhe would conſent to an inſeparable bar being laid againſt her own peace and happineſs—Beſides, ſhe ſhould in a few months actually make him a father—Why then would he not make himſelf an huſband? She ſoon gained her point—and before ſhe left London, the perfect profanation of the holy rites of matrimony was committed—and they ſealed their former

mer infamy by an act, the motives conſidered, equally infamous.

On her return to the North, Mrs. Arlington, as ſhe was yet called, took every opportunity of ſpeaking in praiſe of Hanbury—related the attention he paid her affairs, and the intereſt he ſeemed to take in all that concerned her. The young men, too inconſiderate and unſuſpicious to ſee her motive, heard all theſe commendations and inſtances of his goodneſs, with no other remark, than it was very kind—he was a noble hearted fellow—they ſhould be happy to ſee him in the North, and ſuch like. But all this praiſe of her mother, and attention from him, ſunk deep in the boſom of Matilda—ſhe felt her grateful heart expoſed, from the idea that he was ſerving her when he made theſe offers of friendſhip to her mother—But by and by, the continued praiſe ſeemed to outſtrip the occaſion, ſo much ſo, that the elder Arlington could no longer avoid ſaying, his mother

mother beſtowed more praiſe than became the ſituation ſhe was in—She fired up, and made a tart reply—Matilda, who could not ſuffer herſelf to ſee any thing in her mother's frequent eulogiums of the young Templar, but what ſhe thought fully his due, and pleaſed with the partiality ſhewn her future huſband—hurt too at the inſinuation ſhe could not but underſtand of her brother, and agitated to agony by her mother's anſwer—endeavoured to conciliate the thing. But whether young Arlington had been drinking, or whether he had heard ſome intelligence he did not like, he continued in the ſame tone of diſapprobation of ſuch ſpeeches from an old woman of ſo young a man, who was fitter for her daughter than herſelf to think of.

A VIOLENT quarrel was the conſequence. Matilda, diſſolved in tears, knew not how to act—her younger brother was abſent—the mother flew out of the room, and told him ſhe would no longer ſubmit to ſuch

injurious treatment from ungrateful children—ſhe would convince them ſhe could act for herſelf. Matilda, being half heart-broken at being included among the children of ingratitude, a vice inimical to her ſoul, followed with ſtreaming eyes, and begged to be admitted to the dreſſing-room, in which Mrs. Arlington had ſhut herſelf up. In vain were her prayers and entreaties—ſhe would not hear, ſhe would not anſwer her—And ſometime after ſhe had retired ſobbing to her own chamber, ruminating on what would be the reſult of all this confuſion, ſhe ſaw the chaiſe come to the door, in which Mrs. Arlington threw herſelf in haſte, and it drove off as faſt as it could.

Left to their own ſuggeſtions, the young people remained ſome days in a ſtate of cruel ſuſpenſe, every hour expecting to hear ſomething, and dreading what that ſomething would be, Miſs Arlington however reſolving in her own mind, tho' uncon-

unconſcious of offending, to make every conceſſion, ever ſo humiliating, to procure a reconcilement with her mother, whom more than death ſhe dreaded having any difference with. In ſomething leſs than a week, Mrs. Arlington's marriage with Richard Hanbury, eſq. of the Inner Temple, was announced in form to the aſtoniſhed ſons and the diſtracted daughter.

CHAP. XIII.

The Victims.

THE grief that ſeeks not to vent itſelf in tears and lamentations; the injuries that find not relief in reproaches, corrode the boſom where they inhabit. Thus fared it with the hapleſs Matilda. "She pined "in thought."—A ſickly pale took poſſeſſion of her once blooming cheek; and by a ſlow but certain road her ſteps led to the grave. Her brothers ſaw and deplored her ſituation. They uſed every means to comfort her, but "grief ſat heavy at "her heart." She complained not; ſhe came into company when they wiſhed it; but if left to chuſe, the ſilent ſolitary walk was her's. By dint of tender intreaty, her eldeſt brother obtained the ſecret from her care-

care-worn breaſt; for heretofore ſhe made her mother's ill-adviſed marriage and antecedent unkindneſs, the plea for her ill health and total privation of ſpirits. Overcome by his affectionate efforts to ſpeak comfort to the lovely mourner, ſhe could no longer reſiſt; but throwing her arms round his neck and hiding her bluſhing cheeks in his boſom, with floods of tears ſhe related how cruelly ſhe had been deceived by Hanbury.

Both the Arlingtons liſtened with impatient aſtoniſhment; the younger had juſt heard a piece of news which he was coming to communicate, juſt as his unhappy ſiſter was beginning her tale of woe; at the finiſhing the painful recital, ſhe could not help ſaying, ſhe wondered what it could be, her mother had ſaid to Hanbury, to turn his love ſo far from her as to make him give her up for ever. "See," ſhe added, "how affectionately he wrote "ſince the death of my dear father. You

" know, William, I did not ſay one word " on the day of that unfortunate quarrel, " only to mitigate matters. How could a " mother, whom I never willingly offend- " ed, traduce her child, and turn that " heart againſt me, on which ſhe knew the " peace of mine depended? I wiſh but to " have that cleared up, and then reſign " my breath for ever."

" Not ſo, I hope," cried the younger Arlington, " I hope my deareſt Matilda " will live to diſpiſe ſo great a villain." Villain! and Hanbury!—Matilda ſtarted at the aſſociation of ſuch ideas:—" yes!" repeated he, " doubly and trebly a vil- " lain! that vile wretch we are doomed " to call mother, at this inſtant lies in of " a daughter; and you all know it is not " ſix months ſince ſhe" like Niobe, all tears, " wept over my father's grave.— " That villain carried on an infamous in- " trigue with her, while yet my poor father " lived. Heaven only knows whether he " had not an untimely end." Matilda

MATILDA had changed colour, and breathed ſhort during this relation; but by this time ſhe fell ſenſeleſs on the floor; with ſome difficulty they recovered her to life, but alas! her ſenſes were fled for ever. Raving and melancholy by turns; each ſeeming moſt dreadful as each prevailed.—The unhappy brothers called in every aſſiſtance. All proved vain; and from ſuch an afflicting circumſtance, they conſoled themſelves, when death, like a humane friend, ſhrouded the ill-fated Matilda in the peaceful grave.

HER vile mother, with her equally vile huſband, continued their career of pleaſure unalloyed by remorſe of conſcience; they hardly gave a ſigh to the fate of Matilda, who had been the ſacrifice of their impious paſſion. In about a year ſhe produced a ſon; and within half that time, gave ſigns of a ſtill farther increaſe. Her jointure was large, but the ſtyle they lived in was grand; few reſources within themſelves;

they eagerly ran into company; their parties were numerous, if not reſpectable. Her character was rather doubtful; but there are perſons who will not enquire, leſt the reſult of their enquiry ſhould not turn out as they would have it—Of this deſcription her routs were chiefly compoſed. Expences of horſes, ſervants, equipage; and now children called for a great income. He ſaw, if his wife died, there was no proviſion for him and family; as a great part of her ready money went to pay his debts, and the unſettled part of her income had mouldered away in caſual expences; for neither of them knew œconomy but by name.

He propoſed to Mrs. Hanbury to live abroad for ſome time. Their retreat was rather ſudden and ſecret. He gave out he was gone to America, a thing which gained credit, as part of her jointure was an eſtate in Maryland, her father having connexions in that quarter of the world. But he really went

went to the South of France, there changing his name,

FROM his being entered the Temple, he became acquainted with many lawyers who diſgrace that ſociety. There is a kind of magic which aſſimilates ſuch minds together; he made two or three intimacies with men who were undeſerving the name.—There are too many inſtances of the chicanery of the law, and too many of its followers that put thoſe little artifices in force to trepan the unwary. In ſhort, it would ſcarcely admit of a queſtion at coach-maker's hall, Whether lawyers did more miſchief than good in this kingdom?

THE ſociety originated in the folly, and are ſupported by the treachery of mankind. One of theſe humble retainers, who would do any dirty work for a little clean gold, undertook to go down to Hanbury-caſtle, and learn, by inſinuating himſelf into the family, whether Mr. Richard was ever talked

talked of, and how they went on. He was pleaſed, and rewarded his emiſſary when he learnt that there was no heir to the eſtate coming, nor had been ſince his vile ſcheme had been fruſtrated; but on a ſecond expedition the next year, he found Mrs. Henry Hanbury was near her time. His hopes being now cruſhed again, as it has been ſaid, he took his family abroad; but being diſſatisfied, he left them, pretending to make a tour into Italy, though in reality he came over to England; he again reſumed a different name, diſguiſed himſelf and took his way down to the caſtle.—He hovered about ſeveral days; and on that day which terminated the life of Mr. Henry Hanbury, this wretched creature haunted him in his walks, no doubt, with an intent of perpetrating the horrid deed, while he was out in the fields, but could not find an opportunity, as a gentleman accompanied him almoſt all the time; he then thought he muſt wait till a future day; but before he returned to his obſcure dwelling

ling, ſome way from Hanbury Caſtle, truſting in his diſguiſe, he reſolved to prowl about the garden.—In paſſing near the houſe, at a diſtance he ſaw his devoted brother ſleeping in the ſtudy; the weather being warm, a window was open. Soft and ſilent is the ſtep of the murderer—he ſtole gently into the room; and taking one of the piſtols from the chimney, deliberately clapped it to the temple of ſlumbering innocence, and hurried him out of the world. Inſtantly dropping the piſtol he leaped out of the window, and no traces could be ſeen of any one entering. The unnatural murderer judged probably that the ſhock of hearing ſuddenly of ſo tragical an end of her huſband, would cauſe a miſcarriage in Mrs. Hanbury, with the death of the child; that time, and ſeeing no heir to the eſtate, might leſſen his father's reſentment to him, and pave the way to a reconcilement; particularly if the mother ſhould follow the child; all which he flattered himſelf would happen; truſting

them

then to theſe contingencies, he quitted his native land once more; took paſſage for Leghorn, and in a little time joined his wife and children, keeping however this circumſtance from his partner in guilt, knowing how dangerous is that man's ſituation, who puts it in his wife's power to hang him.

THE death of the mother indeed proved as he predicted, the conſequence of her huſband's murder; but the innocent child remained to be ſenſible of his inveterate obduracy and hatred.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIV.

Tales of the Caſtle.

IT is now time to perform the promiſe already given, of relating the events of the caſtle up to the period whence this hiſtory commences.

THE unhappy widow of Henry Hanbury, dragged through a painful exiſtance to the aſtoniſhment of every one, as if by a particular providence to give birth to an heir to the caſtle in the perſon of our heroine. In the moſt pathetic terms ſhe recommended her almoſt orphan daughter to the care of her father-in-law, requeſting him to preſerve his own life for her ſake; to inſtil into her ductile mind the principles of piety and virtue, and to allow all the

the tender affection he had ever beſtowed on herſelf and unfortunate huſband, to center in their only repreſentative; ſhe was ſupported, and the infant placed in her nerveleſs arms; with fervor, though near her end, ſhe bleſſed and kiſſed it, and then delivering it into the hands of its grandfather, declared ſhe had now no further buſineſs in this world. All her hopes, all her deſires tended to that kingdom, whither her beloved Henry had been ſent in ſo untimely a manner; for with the breath of a dying woman, ſhe would ſtill affirm, that his own hand could never have done ſo raſh a deed; and ſhe died with the hope the perpetrator would one day, through the wiſdom and goodneſs of God, be diſcovered, to reſcue the memory of the beſt of men from the ſtigma that had been caſt on it. In a few minutes her ſtrength intirely failed, but her now colourleſs eyes were fixed on her babe, whom old Mr. Hanbury ſtill preſſed in his arms. Her lips motioned to ſpeak—but the ſound was fled. For a moment a tranſient

ſient gloom ſeemed to animate her features; ſhe went—it was all at an end; the final ſtroke was given—the thread of life was broken.

Mr. Hanbury remained motionleſs for ſometime, hardly knowing if her laſt breath had ſtopped—when he found ſhe was really dead, and that his heart-breaking ſorrows could no more diſturb her, he laid the lovely babe by her departed mother, and gave way to the fullneſs of his grief. He wrung his aged hands, and lifting them up to heaven ſeemed in ſpeechleſs agony to demand why his cup ſhould thus run over with affliction? A darling ſon perhaps inhumanly murdered—a daughter, dear to him as if the iſſue of his loins, dead under his eye, the conſequence of the recent misfortune. His other ſon reprobated for the moſt unnatural villainy; and he himſelf deprived of his wife, his beloved wife, by a broken heart, cauſed by this ſon's depravity; words at leaſt burſt forth—"Who is ſo forlorn

" as I am?" cried the old man, the tears rolling down his reverend cheeks—" I ſtand " like an aged tree, a ſapleſs trunk, with " all my branches torn away; I have no " ſupport; I have no one to weep with me " —I have no hand to wipe my tears away; " I have no friendly arm to ſupport me; I " am alone in the world—a mark for the " arrows of misfortune, and I am ſorely " ſmitten; alas! *when will the wicked ceaſe* " *from troubling? and when will the weary* " *have reſt?*"

He hung over the lifeleſs corſe, and the faſt dropping tears fell on the face of death. It looked as if they had diſtilled from her eyes.—At that inſtant the little infant ſtretched out its hands as if imploring protection; the laſt requeſt of the dying mother ruſhed on the mind of Mr. Hanbury. " My tears," cried he, " my ſorrows will " avail as little as thoſe ſeeming tears of " my loſt love, if they operate not in fa- " vour of the ſurviving.—Yes, poor babe!

" whoſe

" whoſe inauſpicious birth is ſealed by the
" blood of both thy parents—I will re-
" remember that ſaint's requeſt.—I will
" ſtrive to live for thy ſake, and to ap-
" prove myſelf worthy of once being bleſ-
" ſed in my children." " Oh!" con-
tinued he, redoubling his tears, " Why am
" I forever deprived of ſuch bleſſings!—
" I will preſerve thy precious life—for if
" I loſe thee, I am bereaved indeed."

On the day which was to unite the mortal part of Mrs. Hanbury to her dear huſband, preparations were likewiſe made for the baptiſm of their orphan daughter. Over the open coffin of her dead mother was Arpaſia named, being the ſame as hers whoſe obſequies were to follow this ceremony. A noble monument was erected over the hapleſs pair—to which as ſoon as the lovely infant exhibited proofs of her excellent ſenſe, her grandfather led her, and explained to her their mournful end. She heard the relation with horror and amazement

amazement—but when he ſhewed her their portraits in miniature, her ſoul melted with tenderneſs—ſhe kiſſed, ſhe wept over them, and imprinted kiſſes likewiſe on the cold urns, claſping them in her little arms. Her underſtanding ſeemed mature, at an age when children in general ſhew only a puerile attention to moſt things—her form was elegant—her manners gentle and engaging. She was the delight, the pride of her grandfather—but he ſuffered not his affection for her to prevent the neceſſary means of education. She was placed under the care of a very deſerving and accompliſhed governeſs at Newbury in Berkſhire, and never but at the vacations did Mr. Hanbury indulge himſelf in ſeeing her—prudently reflecting, that at beſt his time with her could be but ſhort; but ſhould her education be neglected, the longeſt life ſhe might have would be little better than a blank; beſides, as ſhe would be in poſſeſſion of a large eſtate, it was more neceſſary that her mind ſhould be ſtored with a

fund

fund of uſeful knowledge; that ſhe ſhould manage the truſt repoſed in her hand with ſuch œconomy and wiſdom, as ſhould bring her peace at the laſt.

THE benevolence of her heart was ſuch, that at every vacation, ſome one or other of the numerous poor were bound to bleſs the hour ſhe was ſent on earth. Her charities were univerſal — but diſcriminated with ſo much juſtice and propriety, that ſhe confirmed the good, reclaimed the profligate and careleſs, and ſatisfied all. Mr. Hanbury made her his almoner—and well ſhe diſcharged the truſt. She erected buildings for a ſchool, which ſhe endowed, and everlooked herſelf—gave premiums for excelling in every branch of female work—aſſiſted the antient—taught the young—and enabled the heads of colleges to ſupport and inſtruct their children. Her grandfather with the utmoſt pleaſure looked forward to the happineſs of a riſing generation, which would owe ſo many bleſſings to his beloved Arpaſia.

ON

On her quitting ſchool, which was not till ſhe had attained the age of ſixteen, ſhe had occaſionally ſuch of her young friends as ſhe diſtinguiſhed with that appellation, to paſs ſome time with her at the caſtle, ſharing with her the delightful taſk of humanity, and adminiſtering to the comforts of an old man, who doated on her—Among theſe was Miſs Charlotte Bromley, who to a pleaſing perſon joined a fund of good nature and compliability of temper—her ſpirits were lively, and though in point of underſtanding greatly inferior to Arpaſia, her ſprightlineſs and docility rendered her the deareſt of her companions in her eſtimation.

Charlotte was ths only daughter of a gentleman of ſmall fortune, and rather obſcure family—Such an acquaintance then as Miſs Hanbury, independent of her exquiſite worth, which perhaps was not taken into the account, was well worth cultivating.

Mr.

Mr. Bromley had ſtrained his purſe to give his daughter an elegant rather than uſeful education—but he hoped, as many fond, fooliſh parents do, that by enabling her to make a good figure at ſchool, he might increaſe her connexions, and poſſibly procure her a good eſtabliſhment. He had ſtill greater expences in ſupporting two ſons; one of whom he deſigned for the church; the other had, by dint of friends, been ſent out a cadet to the Eaſt—From this laſt he hoped great things, and one time had it in contemplation to ſend Charlotte to ſeek her fortune in the ſame quarter—but the friendſhip of Miſs Hanbury appeared to promiſe a more eligible plan, and he gave way to very flattering hopes, which the frequent accounts of the munificence of Arpaſia's preſents to Charlotte contributed to confirm.

The viciſſitudes of human life are many—Mr. Bromley experienced them in a great degree, in the courſe of a few months. He

had offended an uncle in the early part of his marriage, who never would ſee him, or receive any conceſſions from him—reprobating the whole family—A fit of the gout, however, brought the old man to a ſenſe of the duty of forgiveneſs of injuries—his heart relented towards the children of his nephew, and he made his will, bequeathing all his fortune, which had been acquired in the Alley, to the three children of Mr. Bromley; his death ſoon put them into poſſeſſion of this unexpected wealth. The joy of Mr. Bromley received a ſevere check by the loſs of his eldeſt ſon at Cambridge, of a violent fever, and while his tears were yet flowing, a letter from the laſt brought the fatal news of the other being killed in a duel at Calcutta. He now found, what he before could have no conception of, that riches are not competent to beſtow happineſs. His fair daughter felt herſelf conſoled by the proſpect of making as great a figure in life as her friend Arpaſia, whom with all her good nature, ſhe

ſhe could not ſometimes help regarding with a degree of envy; but always reconciled it to herſelf, by thinking it only regret that ſhe had it not in her power to do ſo many acts of charity—like too many perſons, who look on charity as only almsgiving—when reaſon and reflection tell us that it is in the power of every one to be charitable. If we poſſeſs not riches, we may have a heart to ſympathize with the diſtreſſed—we may weep with thoſe that weep—we may by good counſel reſtrain the unwary from ſetting their foot aſide—we may defend the character of the injured, and abſent—we may teach the ignorant.—In ſhort, we may be benevolent and charitable, though we have but little to beſtow. Charlotte's however, was a common mind, and in this inſtance ſhe thought as the multitude commonly do. To ſee herſelf then all at once poſſeſſed of ſixty thouſand pounds, it was enough to make that head giddy, who ſaw not that there was ſtill an

infinite ſuperiority between Arpaſia and herſelf, a ſuperiority, which

"Chance nor gives nor takes away."

But as Charlotte judged only from the exterior, ſhe was likely to make this miſtake —thouſands do it every day.

ARPASIA moſt truly rejoiced in the good fortune of her friend, and mingled her congratulations with the ſweeteſt reflections on the inſtability of human happineſs, ſince it muſt ever have ſuch allays to its being perfect—being aſſured her gentle Charlotte could have experienced the completeſt felicity in ſharing this noble acquiſition with her beloved brothers; but after dwelling on their early deaths, drew the ſublimeſt conſolations from the conviction, that they were now enjoying treaſure which could never decreaſe, and everlaſting peace which could not be taken away.——Charlotte thought this the leaſt agreeable letter ſhe had ever received from Arpaſia—ſhe could

have

have excuſed ſo many moral reflections—ſhe could not help fancying they contained a reproach to herſelf for never having made them.

VARIOUS circumſtances aroſe to prevent the friends meeting—but they kept up a frequent correſpondence, which ſerved to cement their early affection.

WHEN Miſs Bromley had been in poſſeſſion of this fortune about a year and half, her father had it in his power to gratify the ambition which riches fail not to inſpire in little minds, of aggrandizing his family, by liſtening to the overtures of the Earl of Carberry, for a marriage between Charlotte and his only ſon Lord Derville. Her fortune was a deſirable acquiſition to his lordſhip, and the being called father by a lord, was equally rapturous to the weak-minded Bromley. When all parties agree, the lawyers are ſoon ſet to work. Mr. Bromley thought his daughter's 60,000l. well laid

out in a title; and the noble earl knew that in ſo much ſolid gold he ſhould procure the moſt ſolid advantages—there was a conſiderable mortgage on the eſtate, which half Charlotte's fortune would clear.—Twenty thouſand he took to himſelf and gave the other ten to the new married pair to ſet off with ſome eclat.—Her ſettlement which was proportioned to her fortune, was made out of the eſtate which was intailed on Lord Derville.

CHARLOTTE wrote in high ſpirits, while this arrangement was making, to her young friend at the Caſtle, mentioned her future huſband as a moſt accompliſhed nobleman—and that ſhe ſtood the faireſt chance of being the happieſt of women—deſcribed the profuſeneſs of her jewels, the magnificence of her houſe and furniture, the ſplendour and taſte of her carriages—and added, nothing could be wanting but the ſociety of her deareſt Arpaſia to participate of her felicity, to render it perfect.

THAT

THAT gratification was not in the power of her friend to beſtow—as the duteous Arpaſia devoted the whole of her time to the pleaſing taſk of contributing to her grandfather's eaſe and comforts. She contented herſelf then with ſending a congratulatory letter, warm from a heart alive to every tender impreſſion, accompanying it with a nuptial preſent.—In a few weeks a letter arrived ſigned Charlotte Derville, dated Portman-ſquare—ſurrounded by affluence, young, lively, and her own miſtreſs, ſhe entered on her career with ſpirit to enjoy it; ſhe ſtill kept up her literary correſpondence—but every letter was haſtily concluded to give way to the hair dreſſer—the park—the court—the opera, or ſome other place of public entertainment—To the enjoyment of her new ſplendor we will leave her for ſome time.

CHAP. XV.

An Experiment.

THOUGH by the attendance of Arpaſia on her grandfather, ſhe was prevented ſharing with her friend Lady Derville the amuſements of London, ſhe by no means led a dull life at the caſtle.—The ſociety in its vicinage and environs was reſpectable, if not numerous; and the activity of her mind, with the conſtant exerciſe of her benevolence, joined to the pleaſure ſhe took in the various accompliſhments ſhe poſſeſſed, filled up her time and gave her an air of chearfulneſs as heightened her natural beauty, which no clouds of adverſe fortune had ever yet ſhaded.—Her heart tho' tender had never yet felt the paſſion of love; at preſent ſhe beheld all mankind as brothers.—She took a generous concern in the

the affairs of every one; but as to a particular diſtinction, ſhe was ſtill a ſtranger to it.

RICHARD HANBURY, who at ſeveral periods had employed his faithful emiſſary, felt ſome hopes ariſe in his heart, when he heard that every offer of marriage had been rejected by Arpaſia, and that her heart was totally diſengaged. Naturally ſanguine and ever open to his own intereſt, he formed ſchemes of ſucceſs from an experiment he was reſolved to make—ſhould he draw a prize he ſhould be made rich amends for all his pains; ſhould a blank be his portion he could be no worſe off than now—ſo that at all events, he ſhould be juſtified to himſelf by making the trial.—He had for many years lived very unhappily with his wife—as her age advanced, ſhe grew jealous of him—and his immoral character but too well ſtrengthened her ſuſpicions. She left him in a fit of paſſion and returned to England—as he had little remaining be-

ſide her jointure, his circumſtances became ſtraitened, and his having three children to maintain added to his difficulties.—Mrs. Hanbury, as bad a mother as ſhe was a wife, reſolved to enjoy herſelf without beſtowing any thought on her relative duties, ſuppoſed ſhe did enough to allow him one quarter of her income for the ſupport of the family, and taking a houſe in a faſhionable ſtreet, gave parties, and by degrees got admitted into company where, had her character been fully examined, ſhe would have been for ever excluded—but cards and public aſſemblies are great levellers, and people that wiſh for crowded rooms muſt not diſcriminate too much.

The two ſons of Richard Hanbury had received a good education abroad—but as the finances of the father were ever low, he had no means of eſtabliſhing them—the war was now at an end—and they ſaw themſelves indigent, without the ability of being otherwiſe.—The daughter lived likewiſe at home

home—diſcontent and want of œconomy reigned in the houſe—and as a *dernier reſort*, Richard formed the plan of attempting a reconciliation with his father.—Upwards of twenty years had elapſed ſince his baniſhment from the caſtle—he was well convinced that the intermediate tranſactions of his life, if at all, could be but imperfectly known.—Natural affection can never be totally extinguiſhed in the boſom of a parent, and he had once been the ſharer of it in a great degree. No one now remained to contradict the ſtory he had planned to relate to him reſpecting the circumſtance which had driven him ſo diſgracefully from his native place—He hoped to give it ſuch a turn as, at this diſtance of time, might do away the moſt atrocious part of it, and ſoften the reſt.

All his intelligence by his ſpy amounted to this in his own mind, that the old gentleman was drawing towards his grave, that Miſs Hanbury, from her ſedulous attention

to him was ignorant of the world, and eaſy to be impoſed on—ſhe was young and artleſs, had yet never declared in favour of any man, and it was believed had really never experienced the leaſt tenderneſs for one more than another—all which made greatly for the advantage of Richard.—Her character for benevolence and gentleneſs of diſpoſition, as the country were acquainted with—could then his ſon, who to a handſome perſon joined a good addreſs, with the almoſt never-failing auxiliary of a foreign education, inſinuate himſelf into her affections, after he had himſelf paved the way to a reconciliation, he might once again ſee himſelf in a line to poſſeſs the eſtate. He propoſed the ſcheme to the eldeſt, who could not foreſee much difficulty in the attempt—nor any thing prepoſterous in ſuppoſing his couſin's heart vulnerable to his attacks, which however were to be carried on by *mining*, not by *coup de main*;—but no matter by what means they

they got poſſeſſion of the garriſon, all ſtratagem was lawful—and they eaſily ſettled it with themſelves, anxious for the time of opening the campaign.

CHAP.

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CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

The Succeſsful Attack.

ONE morning as Arpaſia was playing on the harp, and accompanying with her voice in a favourite ſong of her grandfather's, a ſervant announced a gentleman who had brought a letter, which he begged to have the honour of preſenting himſelf; on being admitted, a perſon of an elegant appearance, though great dejection and perturbation of countenance ſeemed to cloud a fine ſet of features, in a moſt reſpectful and graceful manner preſented the letter with a trembling hand. Mr. Hanbury, ſtruck with his addreſs, received it without ſpeaking—Arpaſia, ever attentive, requeſted the ſtranger to be ſeated, which, however, he declined, as if from a conſciouſneſs

ouſneſs that, ſituated as he was, it would not be proper to avail himſelf of ſuch politeneſs. His eyes were turned with a modeſt anxiety on the old gentleman; who, taking out his ſpectacles, broke open the ſeal—The alteration of his countenance called forth the attention of Arpaſia—yet not ſuppoſing that ſhe could have any intereſt in the letter, ſhe ſat, ſilently regarding the viſitor and her grandfather by turns—He had now read one ſide of the ſheet, and was preparing to turn it, when the young man, attentive to his cue, inſtantly threw himſelf, to the utter amazement of Arpaſia, at her feet, and burſting into tears, intreated her interceſſion for forgiveneſs in behalf of a dying father. This action, at once ſo aſtoniſhing and unexpected, interrupted Mr. Hanbury's finiſhing the letter—"Who, and what are you?" aſked he, hardly knowing what he ſaid—"If you acknowledge me, every thing," he replied—"if you continue to reprobate "me, nothing." "Oh! divine image of "heaven,"

" heaven," added he, lifting up his claſped hands to Arpaſia, " deign, oh " deign but to read that letter—it will " ſoften your heart, it will teach it the way " of reconciling an unhappy father to his " evil deſtiny—it may be the bleſſed, thrice " bleſſed means of reſtoring him to peace, " which he can never know, unleſs he is " pardoned by his earthly parent—till that " is attained he cannot hope, that even " his penitence, his ſufferings will procure " him a remiſſion of ſins from his heavenly " one."——

ARPASIA, unable to ſpeak from ſurprize and ſhock, reached forth her agitated hand for the letter, which fell on the table—Recovering herſelf, however, in an inſtant, ſhe intreated the ſupplicant to riſe, and with the ſweeteſt aſſurances begged him to rely on the influence ſhe had with her grandfather—ſhe haſtily run over the contents—" Good heavens," ſhe exclaimed, " are you " then the ſon of my uncle?" The laſt word

word was hardly pronounced, when Mr. Hanbury, with a ſtern look, bid him leave the room—"Go," ſaid he, in an authoritative voice, "go to that wretch your fa-"ther—tell him I pardon him, on condi-"tion I never hear more of him." The youth roſe, humbly bowed, and hiding his face in his handkerchief, was quitting the room—Arpaſia, whoſe benevolent boſom could ſeparate the ſufferer from the crime, but who could not reconcile forgiveneſs with reprobation; above all, could not inflict puniſhment on the innocent for the ſins of the guilty, which ſhe thought repentance and length of time had in a great degree done away; caught him by the ſleeve, and leading him up to her grandfather, addreſſed him in ſuch a ſtrain of eloquent perſuaſion, that the old gentleman could no longer reſiſt the lovely pleader—he folded her to his boſom, and ſobbed aloud, whilſt ſhe was painting the dreadful feelings of a dying man, labouring under the curſe of a father; expatiated on

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on the noble exercise of benevolence and the godlike atribute of mercy, with the generous forgiveness of injuries. His heart, which had ever been tender and naturally fond of his children, expanded at the idea of embracing a repentant son—The work was soon completed — The good news which the young man carried to town had a happy effect on the health of the heart-broken penitent, and in as decent a time as it would take for him to recover from his feigned illness, a coach brought him and his three children to the castle—the meeting was affecting—for even the iron heart of Richard felt softened. And notwithstanding the callosity of repeated crimes, he felt awe-struck at the mild majesty of Arpasia, and for the first time began to fear his scheme of furthering an union between his son and her, not so practicable as he once thought.

Arpasia, with a gracefulness that accompanied all her actions, did the honours of

of the houſe to her new-found relations, with that kind of freedom as entirely removed any uneaſy ſenſations they might have felt of their own inferiority.

HER heart felt light and happy—and the reflection that her own fortune might be leſſened by the intereſt ſhe had taken in this reſtoration, bore not the proportion of a grain to a ton weight, when ſhe ſaw four perſons raiſed from the deepeſt deſpair to chearfulneſs and certain felicity—The only alloy ſhe experienced was, the inefficacy of her prayer to her grandfather to ſettle ſome part of his property upon the young Hanburys—to that, and to that alone, he ſhewed an inflexibility that was painful to Arpaſia. "It will ſoon be all "yours," he would ſay—"They, I am "certain, will be no loſers by your being "their protector—and by ſuch a proce-"dure you will bind them to you for ever. "—I at preſent know too little of them "to be able to judge, whether they deſerve "my

" my bounty — you are more of their " age, and can diſcern with an unclouded " judgment — Proportion your gift to " their ſeveral merits; but ſtill remember " they are but deſcendants of a younger " branch." Though not ſatisfied with the deciſion of the old gentleman, ſhe acquieſced in ſilence, but with that rectitude of heart, that diſtruſts even itſelf, and is urgent to put it out of its own power to retract— She drew up, what in her own mind would be fit for her to beſtow without the appearance of oſtentation, and what they might receive without meanneſs, reſolving it ſhould be her firſt buſineſs after ſhe arrived at the age of twenty-one, of which ſhe wanted little more than a year, to ſign and preſent theſe deeds to each of them. While the innocent and virtuous Arpaſia was ſtudying how in the moſt delicate manner ſhe ſhould eſtabliſh their fortunes, were they, on the other hand, conſpiring to undermine her hopes and juſt proſpects—But ſhe, equally above art in herſelf, or ſuſpecting

ſo

ſo diabolical a deſign in them, gave herſelf up to the pleaſing contemplation of a generous mind, and enjoyed in her own probity "that peace which goodneſs bo-"ſoms ever."

THEY had not been three weeks inmates at the caſtle, ere they began their plan of operations on the heart of the unſuſpecting maid—But in this inſtance Mr. Edward Hanbury became the dupe of his own artifice; for he ſoon felt the flame his father wiſhed him to feign for his lovely couſin; and ſo little did his paſſion conciliate his father's favour, that he was ſoon judged an alien to the cauſe, and left out of the cabinet councils.—Indeed this young man would have been a very reſpectable character, had he happily been born of better parents; what they had corrupted, the virtues of Arpaſia promiſed to reform—Whenever his eyes met hers, a conſcious bluſh overſpread his really handſome face, and involuntary ſighs burſt from his un-

quiet

quiet breaſt. Richard Hanbury ſneeringly aſked him, if he thought a heart like Arpaſia's was to be carried by ſuch a whining lover? that his fooliſh paſſion muſt ſink him in the eyes of the woman he wiſhed moſt to aſpire to pleaſe. All the return he made to theſe reproaches was, a promiſe to act more in the character his father had laid down for him, if he could. As the artful Richard found no ground could be gained by ſuch proceedings, he one day took the opportunity of inveighing againſt his ſon in the moſt bitter terms, for the daring preſumption he perceived with the utmoſt ſorrow that he entertained, of obtaining what hardly any man on earth could merit—But he ſhould renounce him—he ſhould be no ſon of his—he would not have his chance of being perfectly reinſtated in his dear father's heart overthrown by the indiſcreet paſſion of an obſtinate boy. When his paſſion would give Arpaſia an opportunity of ſpeaking, ſhe mildly addreſſed him thus:—"And why, Mr. Han-

"bury,

" bury, ſhould you be ſo violently enraged
" againſt your ſon Edward? If he is ſo
" unfortunate to have conceived an at-
" tachment for me—for I cannot but ſup-
" poſe I am the perſon whom you mean
" to compliment—I am thoroughly con-
" vinced, that from him I ſhould never
" have heard of it—And allow me to ſay,
" I cannot think *him* more reprehenſible
" for being ſenſible of a paſſion, implanted
" in our boſoms by the Great Artificer of
" Nature, than *I* am for being a perfect
" ſtranger to it; while my couſin continues
" ſilent on this ſubject, though I am as
" equally ſorry his heart ſhould poſſeſs ſo
" much affection, as I am unable to re-
" turn it, I cannot think myſelf any way
" aggrieved by it. I doubt not Mr. Ed-
" ward Hanbury would have ſeen the im-
" poſſibility of ſucceſs, and that his ill-
" placed love would have died away of
" itſelf, had you beheld it with ſilent pity,
" as I have done."

Not the tongue of angels could so effectually convince the artful Richard, that all his fine-spun conceits were lost for ever. The former part of her speech had given birth to hopes, that the latter had totally destroyed—and spoken with such steady calmness, as shewed she had indeed long seen the passion of his son, and as long had predetermined against encouraging it.--Enraged at his disappointment, he vented his ire on Edward, and from that hour he became his detestation—Unable to live in her sight, and unequal to the spiteful raillery of his brother and sister, he one day after dinner ventured to say, he wished to see Bath. Arpasia instantly saw into his motive, and approved him for it—She advised him to use no delay, as the season would soon be over; and then she would farther advise him, as he knew so little of the beauties of his own country, to take a tour into South Wales—His father, with a dissatisfied tone, said, travelling was too expensive for the children of younger brothers—"Happily," cried

cried Arpasia, "the elder branch has the "will as well as the ability, to supply "every proper wish.—The desire of at- "taining knowledge is in that number, "and I think variety of company and "different objects will be of service to my "cousin."

Her kindness, her consideration, and the meaning she so well expressed, agitated poor Edward almost to convulsive agonies —he actually gasped for breath. She affected not to see his emotion, but taking a pen and paper, wrote a draft on her grandfather, for two hundred pounds, which she, laughingly, bid him protest, at the peril of losing his accustomed nightly kiss—In the same strain of good humour he copied it, in proper form, for his banker in London—She presented it to her cousin, who, unable to reply, caught her hand, pressed it to his bosom, and ran out of the room, to hide the emotions he could not restrain, or wish her to be witness to.

He ſat off the next morning, leaving only a verbal compliment by one of the ſervants—As his heart was too good to unite with the reſt, they felt themſelves vaſtly more at eaſe by his abſence—They rather feared his real affection; for Arpaſia would prove a ſtumbling block in the way of their preferment, as they had great reaſon to apprehend he would never unite with them to work her overthrow, which they were determined by ſome means or other to do.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

Generosity rewarded by Ingratitude.

IT is but justice to the character of Arpasia to rescue it from an imbecility, that would deprive it of great merit; it may be thought she shewed it by the patronage she bestowed on Mr. Richard Hanbury's family, when his character ought rather to have called for detestation than countenance.—From her he could never have received the latter, had she known to what a height of wickedness he had arrived—but it must be considered, he had been an alien to his family a great length of time—the event that caused it happened above three years before her birth—that the circumstances were but imperfectly known—that he had, by consummate artifice, softened

the offence, by placing a great part of it to the account of a delicate and apprehenſive woman, who ſuſpected more ill than ever he deſigned, from the knowledge that he had once felt the ſincereſt paſſion for her—Then he had with ſo much contrition bewailed his tranſgreſſions, and acknowledged the juſtice of the complicated misfortunes that had overtaken him, as was calculated to inſpire a boſom, fraught with every tender feeling, with compaſſion, at leaſt for his offspring, who were the innocent ſufferers for his faults.—The ſurmiſe, that her mother never could give up, that either by his hand or contrivance her beloved huſband had been deprived of exiſtence, could not be brought home to him even in idea—He was known to be abſent from England, and there were too many and melancholy inſtances of ſuicide in this country, to ſuppoſe it impoſſible that in ſome gloomy moment, which all men are ſubject to, he might not fall a ſacrifice to a cuſtom that of later years had become very

very frequent—From his preſent behaviour ſhe could have no cauſe for ſuſpicion; he had ſeen a good deal of the world, had a good underſtanding, and knew how to accommodate himſelf to the taſte of every body, without the appearance of doing ſo—He generally took care his opinion ſhould coincide with hers; but then he had the art to do it in ſo delicate a way, that it ſeemed really his own; and if he at any time differed from her, he never failed to bring on the ſubject in ſome future day, and then pay her the compliment of convincing his judgment—In ſhort, not in ſome degree to be a dupe to his deſigns, muſt have required almoſt as much acquaintance with diſſimulation as himſelf had. Her heart was too good to ſuſpect others—ſhe had never aſſociated with bad people—and drawing her pictures of mankind from her own rectitude, it is not to be wondered that ſhe did not, at her early age, take good likeneſſes.

MARIA HANBURY, and her younger brother, though their hearts did not differ from their progenitor's, yet in point of head-piece they fell far ſhort—They could form and execute any bad action with as little compunction as he; but then they were more liable to detection—Arpaſia muſt have been quite blind not to ſee their low deſigns of ingratiating themſelves in the favour of old Mr. Hanbury, and ſeeking to leſſen her in his affection—Their aſſiduity was officious, and defeated itſelf. His heart was too much and habitually attached to Arpaſia, to feel the leaſt diminution of regard, though he was not quickſighted enough to ſee their motive—She, however, clearly ſaw into their views, but contented herſelf with ſeeing them, with an equal mixture of pity and ſilent contempt.

RICHARD HANBURY found himſelf advancing by very ſlow ſteps to the *ultimatum* of his wiſhes, when an accident brought him

him nearer than even his hopes could have placed him, and in time to the completion of all his machinations had pointed to. Arpaſia often took the diverſion of angling in a ſmall boat on the lake; and as the ſpring was remarkably fine, one evening propoſed it as a pleaſant amuſement to her couſins. It ſo happened that they did not take a ſervant with them in the boat, tho' fortunately one of the men was mending a fiſhing-rod on the banks near to them—They had had but little ſport, and Maria, with a childiſh impatience, complained of being tired with having nothing to do, and Arpaſia, ever willing to oblige, had requeſted James Hanbury to put to ſhore—Whether it was owing to unſkilfulneſs, or obſtinacy in not obſerving the directions of the ſervant, who called to him, in putting about, he upſet the boat; he was mean enough to ſpring out upon the ſhallow part of the boat, and dragged out his ſiſter; but poor Arpaſia was plunged into the lake, and really in apparent danger of drowning

—The ſervant threw himſelf into the water, and preſently drew her to ſhore; but the fright had had ſuch an effect on her, that ſhe fainted, and to the ſervant's apprehenſion was already dead—He ran with incredible ſwiftneſs with her in his arms, ſcreaming out "his lady, his dear lady, "was drowned!" The dreadful ſound met the ear of the old gentleman, who was ſitting with Richard in a parlour which overlooked the lawn the man was croſſing —Mr. Hanbury was at the time ſomewhat indiſpoſed with the gout, having his leg on a ſtool, and wrapped round with flannel —Totally regardleſs of himſelf, alive only to the imminent danger of his darling, he ſtarted up, running to meet her, with all the haſte he was able, and entirely free from his complaint—He threw himſelf down by the ſide of his dear Arpaſia, whom the ſervant had laid gently on the graſs, and with all the agony of deſpair, beſought heaven to end his days with thoſe of his beloved angel!—In an inſtant recollecting a cordial

he

he had under his own care, he gave a bunch of keys to Richard, who with all the family were uſing the neceſſary means to reſtore her to ſenſe, and begged him inſtantly to bring it from the cabinet in his ſtudy.—"There is a tide in the affairs of "men, which taken at the ebb leads them "on to fortune." This no one in the world was more ſenſible of than Richard, or more diſpoſed to improve the golden opportunity—He beckoned his daughter, who followed him; he knew on that ring of keys hung one on which every future proſpect of his life depended; inſtantly he twitched it off, and directed Maria to go for the cordial, and then deliver the keys to him—All preſent with the ſwooning Arpaſia, were too much engaged to miſs him for the ſhort ſpace he was abſent; for diſpatch being the ſoul of buſineſs, like the lightening's blaſt, it was but the work of a moment—He ran to his father's bureau, where he knew he kept all his papers with the regularity of a merchant—he poſſeſſed

himſelf of a parchment, on which was written "My Will"—Trembling with eagerneſs and joy, he put it into his pocket; replaced the key on the ring, and gave them into the hand of Mr. Hanbury, who, in his tranſports at ſeeing returning life animate the features of her, on whoſe health and welfare hung all his comfort, hardly recollected having given them to him—A phyſician and ſurgeon, by this time arrived—the former wrote, while the latter performed the operation of bleeding their fair patient; and ſhe was put to bed, tolerably recovered.

When the fears which her danger had excited, began to ſubſide, her grandfather gave ſtrong indications of the gout having ſeized his ſtomach, and that with a degree of violence to which he had never been accuſtomed. What an alteration does the events of a moment occaſion in the circumſtances of men! In the morning Richard's head was aching with the endeavour to hit on

on ſome plan to further his views of intereſt; in the evening, how changed the ſcene!—His father attacked by a diſorder, which at his time of life had the greateſt probability of proving fatal; and the will in his poſſeſſion, which he only waited for an opportunity of deſtroying. He retired into his own room, and locking the door—in a tremor, which the guilty ever feels at the perpetration of a bad action, he broke the ſeals—As this will had been made ſome years, he was not ſurpriſed to ſee his name unmentioned—it was no more than he expected. Juſt as he was deliberating about the deſtruction of the parchment, luckily for him, it ſtruck on his mind, that as Arpaſia was heir-at-law he ſhould gain nothing by deſtroying it—the only means then left was, the dangerous, but too often ſucceſsful one of forging another—He bleſſed his kind genius for prompting the thought, and directly ſent off an expreſs to his faithful emiſſary, to meet him at the next town, to confer on ſome important

matters—True to his principal, this diſgraceful bird of the law flew to obey the mandate—No man could write ſo many hands, or could more nicely copy the writing of others—In a few hours the will was complete, according to directions—And an opportunity was eaſily obtained, when the old gentleman happened to doze, to take his key, ſeal the will with his own ſeal, and replace it in the bureau; Arpaſia being confined to her bed by a ſlight fever, the conſequence of her being drenched in the water.

All the efforts of the doctors, and they called in ſeveral from Bath, proved ineffectual to their wiſhes, of throwing the gout into the extremities: the poor old gentleman endured exquiſite agonies for many days—Agonies, which even the beholding his beloved child reſtored to health could ſcarcely alleviate. Her cares, her tender anxiety, and duteous attendance, ſerved to ſoften, in a little degree, his pains

pains—but her prayers, her tears, were all in vain—the fiat had gone forth, and heaven refumed his own. He expired in about ten days, where all his felicity had centered, in the arms of his adored Arpafia.——A happy inſenſibility for ſome time prevented her feeling her loſs—ſhe was conveyed out of the room, and Maria, who now looked on her as her ſole dependance, aſſiduouſly waited on her.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVIII.

Hypocriſy unmaſked.

ARPASIA felt an additional cauſe of ſorrow, from the conſideration that her fright and danger had been the means of accelerating the death of her ever honoured and revered parent—ſhe had ever loved him with the utmoſt affection.—No one had ever ſhared her heart with him—He had ſupplied every relation to her—and all the fondneſs and filial duty her capacious heart could feel had centered ſolely in him—He had been the ſource of all her happineſs, his indulgence had gratified every wiſh of her innocent and excellent heart, by allowing her to exerciſe that benevolence it was formed to enjoy—He had ever placed the moſt unlimitted confidence in her

her from the earlieſt age, and ſhe knew he had left her miſtreſs of her own actions, never wiſhing to reſtrain her by the power of a guardian, who could not have the love for her he himſelf had.—There was a gentleman, the Rector of the pariſh whom he always recommended her to conſult on any difficulty that might ariſe, ſhould he die ſuddenly, which from his advanced age was not an improbable thing to happen.—Doctor Bernard was at this time abſent at another living.—After putting her ſeal, together with her uncle's on ſuch places as were ſuppoſed to contain papers, ſhe diſpatched Mr Tomkins, with the mournful news of having loſt her beſt and only friend, with a requeſt that he would come to her with all expedition, as ſhe choſe for many reaſons he ſhould be preſent when the will of her dear grandfather was opened, and likewiſe to conſult with him on the mode of the funeral.—" Death" ſhe added " was " a new ſcene of terror to her—and Mr. " Richard Hanbury, with a coldneſs, ſhe

" could

" could not have expected, and lamented " much to ſee, had declined taking any " part in ordering what was neceſſary to " be done.—His behaviour ſhe owned had " hurt her, becauſe it argued a want of " confidence in her will of providing " amply for him and his children, which " it ſhould be the earlieſt buſineſs ſhe " ſhould undertake, now ſo important a " truſt had devolved to her."—The following day Mr. Tomkins returned with two or three lines penned with difficulty, Doctor Bernard had had an attack of the palſy, and in conſequence was now confined to his bed—The note contained very little, beſide ſincerely lamenting her loſs, in which he took a great ſhare, and reminding her, that the requeſt of his honoured friend relative to the conſultation of him, was only a mere compliment, but yet as it was her deſire alſo, he would endeavour to come over to ſee the will opened. As to the funeral, ſhe knew what Mr. Hanbury had often expreſſed concerning

ſuch

ſuch things, and therefore could better act in conformity to his wiſhes when living.

As there was no parade in her real and heart-felt grief, ſhe affected not an incapacity to order what was proper to be attended to—ſhe gave all the directions, though endeavouring to gain her uncle's approbation in all ſhe did.—Maria was profuſe in her commendations of every thing that was propoſed, and James ſervilely attentive; their father being too politic to truſt them with any tranſaction, he began to fear his aſſociates, though they were his own children, and would gladly have ſent his friend the lawyer the ſame way out of the world (could he have done it, undiſcovered) as he had done his excellent brother.

The day for the funeral arrived, without Doctor Bernard's being able to come over to the Caſtle. The body was conveyed to the family vault, waſhed with the unfeigned tears of ſorrow from many eyes, and

and outwardly lamented by the deſpicable triumvirate. On the evening of that mournful day, which forever ſhut him from the view of his duteous Arpaſia—a day which, ſhe apologized to her relations for devoting to ſolitude and grief, ſhe propoſed, ſeeing ſhe thought, uneaſy ſuſpenſe ſitting on their diſcontented brows, that the will ſhould be opened and read.

TOGETHER they all went, accompanied by Mr. Tomkins, whoſe long and faithful ſervices had given him great weight with Arpaſia, to the ſtudy of the deceaſed, and he unlocking the bureau—and breaking up the ſeals which they had reſpectively placed there, Arpaſia took up the parchment.—"This is the will of the bleſſed "ſaint departed," ſaid ſhe—"This is his "dear hand."—She broke the ſeals, and finding her eyes ſuffuſed by tears, ſhe gave it to her uncle's hand; he however refuſed the office—"He had complied with her "wiſh, he ſaid, in being preſent—it was "rather

" rather too much to aſk him to read per-
" haps his own reprobation—The beſt
" he could expect was not to be mentioned
" at all."—" Oh! uncle" ſaid ſhe—" and
" can you have ſo little dependance on my
" word and honour?—See," ſhe continued, taking the paper from her pocket book, which has been before ſpoken of, " ſee—
" what I ever intended doing for you and
" my couſins—and this I will do directly." He apologized—begged ſhe would believe him incapable of ingratitude, and that ſhe could not take amiſs his declining reading the will—Mr. James made the like ſort of excuſes, and finding herſelf unequal to the taſk, beſides the impropriety of it as ſhe thought, ſhe offered it to Mr. Tomkins, who obeyed her commands.

THOSE poets and painters have been commended, who have modeſtly and judiciouſly drawn a veil over diſcriptions and features, the diſtreſs or expreſſion of which they found themſelves unequal to—whether

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an hiſtorian has that privilege I know not; but it certainly might be exerciſed here, if ever it was, as no pen can do juſtice to the variety of expreſſion of countenance exhibited in the auditors of Mr. Tomkins.—Richard counterfeited exceeding well—as to the reſt, they were too much engaged with their own feelings to attend to the effects on the others.—Arpaſia, ſtruck with aſtoniſhment, remained ſilent and rooted to her chair—Tomkins threw down the will, as if infectious.—"How can this be?"—exclaimed the honeſt man—"There muſt "be ſome foul play."—"And where "ſhould it be?" cried Mr. James Hanbury, who could too well have gueſſed—"Has not Miſs Hanbury acknowledged "the will to be my grandfather's?"

"I HAVE nothing to ſay," ſaid Arpaſia, "but to ſubmit to the will of the dead—"be it ever ſacred!"

"THIS

"THIS is unexpected, indeed," ſaid Mr. Richard; "What can be a ſtronger proof "that my dear father knew how much I "had been injured by my cruel brother "and ſiſter, than this of making me heir "to all his eſtates—let me ſee, Mr. Tom-"kins—aye to all of them without reſer-"vation—only the legacies undermen-"tioned. To my ever dear grandchild "Arpaſia Hanbury three thouſand pounds, "to be paid by my aforeſaid ſon Richard, "in ſix months after my deceaſe, over and "above the ſettlement made and provi-"ded for the younger children of Henry "Hanbury, eſquire, and Arpaſia Ellwood. "Pray niece," continued he, addreſſing himſelf to Arpaſia, who was ſitting, reſting her head on her hand, ſo many ideas running through her mind as almoſt took from her the privilege of thinking to any purpoſe—"do you remember never to "have heard that there was a flaw in that "ſettlement? I wonder my father ſhould "forget it."

IT

It has ſometimes happened that the omiſſion of a word has altered the ſenſe of writings ſo much, that many a poor man has been jockied out of his eſtate by it, though the meaning of the teſtator, &c. has been clear enough—but in this inſtance the intruſion of a monoſyllable had done as much.

When the marriage ſettlement had been drawn up, by miſtake it was ſaid, the ſum of thirty thouſand pounds chargeable on the eſtates aforeſaid to be ſettled on the younger *male* children of the aforeſaid Henry, &c. &c. This error was not diſcovered till ſometime after the marriage—They had intended to take council upon it—but unfortunately what people have in their power to do every day, they too often put off till too late—the death of Mr. Henry Hanbury rendered it uſeleſs. Arpaſia became in right of law ſole heireſs—the writings then remained in *ſtatu quo*, as a kind of memento for the family to avoid

avoid ſuch errors in future. "However, "niece", the hypocritical wretch added, "be not uneaſy—you ſhall ever find a "kind protector in me."

ARPASIA too much agitated to ſpeak without tears, bowed to his compliment of protection—and with ſome difficulty riſing, took leave of the aſſemby, retiring to her own room, to which Tomkins would have gladly followed her—but poſſibly Mr. Hanbury thought their conference might bode him no good, ſo he prevented ſuch a meaſure taking effect by requeſting Mr. Tomkins to give himſelf the trouble of again reviſing the will—for he could yet hardly perſuade himſelf of the reality of ſo unhoped-for an acquiſition. He artfully detained the ſteward, overwhelming him with kindneſs and a profuſion of promiſes, deſiring to retain him in an office he had acquitted himſelf of with ſo much advantage to his principals and honour to himſelf. He knew how to gain the old man's

man's heart, which was not proof againſt ſo much flattery as was laviſhly powered into his ear, and promiſed to double his ſalary. Theſe douceurs had ſome weight, although Mr. Benjamin Tomkins would have been happier to have ſerved Arpaſia for half; yet as ſhe was ſet aſide, he thought it not derogatory to his integrity to take care for himſelf and avail him of his honour's great kindneſs for him.

After a ſleepleſs night, Arpaſia took her breakfaſt in her own dreſſing room—but her good ſenſe ſuggeſting to her that ſhe ought to bear her diſappointment with greater philoſophy, and unwilling to give theſe ſtrange unfeeling relations ſuch a triumph over her weakneſs, ſhe reſolved to ſummon courage to meet them in the dining room at four o'clock.

Maria and her brother paid her a ſlight compliment, as ſhe entered the room—and even Mr. Hanbury bowed more ſtiffly than uſual.

uſual. Through the effect of cuſtom—and without reflecting, ſhe paſſed by them to take her ſeat at the table, which from infancy had been the upper end.

"I WILL ſave you the trouble, couſin "Arpaſia," ſaid the forward Maria, with a toſs of her head, puſhing between her and the table and ſeating herſelf in the chair—Arpaſia ſtopped half a ſecond—and took that ſeat, which the day before Maria was happy to occupy.—Pride and indignation ſupplied her with ſpirits to ſupport this new inſolence without deigning to notice it—ſhe joined now and then in the converſation, and preſerved an equality and firmneſs of temper which piqued theſe low-minded creatures, who wiſhed to have ſeen her act as they themſelves would have done in the ſame ſituation—to give them the excuſe of being ſtill more inſolent to her—but the provoking calmneſs, as they ſtiled it, ſhe obſerved, as it took from them the pretence of being impertinent, they were at a loſs how to behave at all.

CHAP. XIX.

The Rejection.

SOON after the desert was cleared, Mr. Richard Hanbury rang for Tomkins, as he wanted to consult him on some alterations —and Maria declaring she was moped to death by so long a confinement at home, proposed to her brother to take an airing in the cabriole—Arpasia found, although the castle was no longer her's, she was as much left to herself as if in a desert, thought no apology necessary for confining herself the remainder of the day in her own apartment, ruminating on the great change of circumstances, unable to develop the cause —and waiting as quietly as she could, the return of her messenger from her now only remaining friend on earth, Doctor Bernard, by whose advice she meant to regulate all her future actions. How

How her ever affectionate grandfather, could be thus wrought upon, she knew not. All she could surmise was, that some very unfair advantage had been taken, but that he should be able to get a will made without Mr. Tomkins or some of the servants being privy to it, appeared the strangest mystery—Wearied with conjectures which only perplexed without solving her doubts, she rested her cause on that Power who could bring good out of evil—and firmly believing that some wise purpose was to be brought about by her present misfortune, she went to bed, and enjoyed much sweeter repose than the successful triumvirate.

WHATEVER outward placidity of countenance guilt may carry, and deceive the world by its smiling face—the poison corrodes within—the fear of detection, the strict guard on all their actions and words robs them of internal comfort—of secret self approbation, "the sun-shine of the

"ſoul"—the very reſpect and courteſy ſhewn them by the ignorant world, are to them tacit reproaches—they feel—they know themſelves undeſerving the attention they meet with—they ſhrink from the broad eye of day—and in their own boſoms find only deeds of darkneſs, and it is a darkneſs which muſt be felt.—The treacherous uncle had a difficult card to play—and the profound ſilence which Arpaſia obſerved on the ſubject, threw him off his ſcent. He was at a loſs how to act. Her quiet acquieſence in the will of the dead, had given him the moſt pleaſing hopes, that from her he ſhould receive no moleſtation in his ill-gotten wealth—but her immediate application to Doctor Bernard awakened the keeneſt apprehenſions in his guilty breaſt. Doctor Bernard was a man who knew the world, and would ſcrutinize more cloſely into the buſineſs than could prove agreeable to him—ſhould his hitherto truſty confidante betray him?—and what repoſe could he place in a villain?—he had been obliged

to

to put himſelf in his power—and he now held his life on the tenure of this man's ſilence. All his ſecurity reſted on the danger his aſſociate would run likewiſe ſhould a diſcovery be made through his means—compoſing himſelf then as well as he could, he addreſſed himſelf to ſleep—but guilt, like Macbeth, had murdered that friend of the unfortunate—his perturbed ſpirit ſought reſt, but could find none.

THE *amiable* brother and ſiſter too had their ſhare of *malheurs*—the cabriole, a favourite carriage of the ever lovely, ever beloved Arpaſia, never was it ſeen—but myriads of ruſtics, boys, girls and thoſe of riper years, uſed to follow it with their bleſſings—a look—a word from Arpaſia, was treaſured up—and repeated when they met on the green at night. Now, how different to the acclamation of former days was the ſhouts the preſent occupiers of the carriage experienced — the very children could

hardly be reſtrained from throwing ſtones at them—contempt and diſgrace followed their wheels. In a country place, the events of the great circulate quickly, every one had heard of the will in three hours after it had been opened, and every one joined in execrating the fortunate Richard Hanbury. Every one, whoſe memory furniſhed them with recollection of his boyiſh years, were ready enough to believe he had practiſed ſome roguery to obtain the eſtate. The lower ſort, were ready to tear open the new cloſed vault of the old ſquire, they could not mention his name without rage, and exclamations of diſguſt. From ſuch an airing then it was not likely Maria and her brother, ſhould return much entertained. No doubt, they meant to recompenſe themſelves by treating their now dependent couſin with haughty inſolence, but her non appearance defeated that ſcheme; ſeldom good company among themſelves, they ſoon ſeparated for the night. The next morning, before the uſual breakfaſt hour, Mr. Edward

Edward Hanbury drove up the avenue in a hired poſt-chaiſe—he had not long quitted Bath, ſo that the expreſs that had been ſent after him overtook him with eaſe—the inſtant he learnt the diſpoſition of his grandfather's will, he turned his horſes heads, and had not reſted till he got to the caſtle. Though he had not much reaſon to reſpect his father's integrity yet he could never ſuſpect him of the turpitude to which his inſatiable avarice and early acquaintance with crimes had carried him—all he could bring himſelf to believe of a parent, was that he had artfully worked on a credulous old man, whom age and infirmities had reduced almoſt to child-hood—and though his heart bled for the diſappointment of Arpaſia's hopes—yet *there*, this very misfortune gave birth to in his own boſom filled him with delight.—He had loved her from the firſt moment in which he became acquainted with her. A farther knowledge of her ſerved only to rivet the chain—but the diſtance which fortune had

placed him below her, and ſtill more the recollection of the rooted enmity ſhe was bound to feel for his father, would naturally, he feared, extend to the ſon. All this, joined to her ſteady refuſal of him, had nearly reduced him to deſpair — and, in conſequence, wiſely to determine to forget her as ſoon as poſſible. Like too many young men, diſſipation preſented itſelf as the moſt likely means. The ready, willing fair one, the circling glaſs were objects at hand. But the modeſt ſenſe that animated the lovely features of Arpaſia, giving a brilliancy to all ſhe did or looked —the univerſal benevolence of her heart, which he had experienced—all theſe were poorly ſupplied by the wanton blandiſhments of venal beauty. And, after a night of diſſolute inebriety, he found

"The wine in his head, but ſtill love in his heart."

All then he got by his experiments was the conviction, how inſipid are all human enjoyments, unleſs guided by reaſon and the

the approbation of our own hearts. His former pleaſures were now deprived of exiſtence, and he could ſubſtitute no others. He was then reſolved to follow his adored Arpaſia's advice, and curſing himſelf for not thinking of it ſooner, made inſtant preparations for his Welch tour, and actually had ſet off on the day before Mr. Hanbury expired.

How different did he now feel himſelf from the Edward Hanbury, who a few weeks before had with a heavy heart bent his ſteps from a place where all he loved reſided—now the horſes could not keep pace with his eager deſire of beholding the lovely girl now within his reach! He remembered, while the warm blood that throbbed in his heart mounted up to his glowing cheek on the bleſt recollection, with what ſoftneſs ſhe looked on him: what a difference ſhe had always made in her behaviour between him and his brother. He knew ſhe had ſaid, "ſhe beheld

" his paſſion with ſilent pity." Oh! might not this inſtance of diſintereſted affection in him create in her gentle generous boſom a ſimilar flame? It muſt—and he ſhould be the moſt bleſt of mankind! He congratulated his happy ſtars that had removed him from the Caſtle, and conſequently from any ſuſpicion of underhand doings, which he now felt himſelf grateful to his provident father for, ſince they had opened ſo fair a proſpect for the attaining his wiſhes. Every thing ſeemed to work together for his good. His ſanguine fancy was running over the moſt delicious ſcenes of uninterrupted bliſs and never-failing joys, when the chaiſe ſtopped at the hall-door. His father received him with extended arms, into which the happy Edward ruſhed, and claſped him with grateful love to his boſom. Haſtily he aſked after his beloved Arpaſia? " In her own " room," replied the father, " we ſee but " little of her." " Dear charming girl!" exclaimed the enraptured Edward, " Oh!

" my

" my father—if I can now prevail on " her to be mine, look round the world " in vain; ſo happy a man as your ſon " can never be found." " And could " you be ſuch a fool, Ned," cries his ſiſter Maria, who entered the room while he was ſpeaking, twirling the key of the tea cheſt round her finger, " to ſolicit the haughty " creature who refuſed you when you was " poor and dependant? No, I would ſee " her hanged firſt." To this polite ſpeech he returned no other anſwer than a look of the utmoſt contempt, attending with eagerneſs to what his father was ſaying, who as it has been obſerved, had always his thoughts fixed on his own *intereſt*, and as far as he could, his *ſafety*. The marriage of his ſon with Arpaſia would be ſecuring both; for ſhould his knavery be in future diſcovered, yet as theſe families would from ſuch a proceeding be ſtill more intimately connected, Arpaſia would loſe her reſentment, in the wiſh of concealing ſuch a breach of honour in a family now her

own. This kind of fallacious reaſoning quieted ſome of his ſcruples, and therefore was embraced by him, as drowning men catch at ſtraws—" and put their truſt in " miracles for ſafety."

As ſoon as breakfaſt was over, at which Arpaſia had declined attending, Edward ſent up a meſſage to intreat the favour of being admitted in her dreſſing-room. Above affectation, or the mean triumph of giving pain, ſhe returned an anſwer which threw him into a moſt delightful humour. His agitated limbs could ſcarcely bear him to the door, but the ſpeech which he had been framing at the time of breakfaſt, ſtood him now in little ſtead. The greateſt idiot could not acquit himſelf worſe than he did. His new honours ſat uneaſy on him. He ſtill felt the ſame awe as he did when he looked on Arpaſia as heireſs to five thouſand a year. It was a leſſon that was of ſervice to him through his future life, and proved to his convicted ſenſe, that

that virtue and goodneſs need only to be ſeen to be adored. And when that virtue and that goodneſs was perſoniſied in the beauteous Arpaſia, it made her appear an angel of light.

To render him eaſy, ſhe complimented him on his good looks, and the advantage a change of air had been to him, from thence led him to talk of his excurſion. He attempted to follow her, but it would not do. His agitation increaſed as his fate was unknown. He roſe and walked about the room with haſty ſteps—then turning ſhort upon her—ſwore he could liſten to the muſic of her voice for ages, but that now he had ſomething to ſay, that let the conſequence be what it would, he could no longer reſtrain. He then in a paſſionate manner threw himſelf on his knees before her, and catching her hand, which ſhe had not time to prevent, intreated her to give value to the fortune he ſhould inherit now, by reſuming it to herſelf in an union with him. She now forcibly

cibly withdrew her hand, and with a repelling motion of it begged him to riſe—and ſince he had ſomewhat abruptly come upon the ſubject, ſhe muſt tell him, ſhe wiſhed him the utmoſt enjoyment of his wealth, without the ſmalleſt envy or deſire to diminiſh it by partaking of it. *Her* heart had never felt the leaſt inclination for the ſtate he hinted at—and ſhe intreated him to forget *he* had ever entertained affections which, on her part, could for a thouſand reaſons, never, no never be returned. She had hoped too that the converſation ſhe had once had with his father, and which ſhe knew had been repeated to him, would have convinced him how uſeleſs this ſecond attempt muſt be—ſhe, herſelf, was ſtill the ſame—*ſhe*, however her fortune had been changed, could know no change in her ſentiments. She added, "If I have "any diſcernment, Mr. Hanbury, I think "you poſſeſs very many good qualities—"though your acquiſition of fortune ren-"ders them not more brilliant in my eyes,

"they

" they may by a proper cultivation give " worth to the fortuitous advantage your " father has gained—and may in time pro- " cure you the heart of an amiable wo- " man, who may feel an attachment mine " is a ſtranger to." Saying which, ſhe made him a curtſey, which he could not but look on as a wiſh to break up the conference; when ſighing deeply, and deeply diſappointed with this total overthrow of his hopes, he left the room, retiring for conſolation to his father, to whom he related all that had paſſed; declaring that without her he ſhould know no enjoyment in life, but concluded there were now no hopes remaining. Richard Hanbury did not think ſo bad of his ſon's cauſe as himſelf—to comfort him he informed him of the error in the ſettlement, which, if enforced, would leave her quite deſtitute.

THE heart of Edward, (which to do juſtice to Arpaſia's diſcernment certainly did poſſeſs ſome good qualities, though they

they had, like the ſeed on the way-ſide, been choaked up by bad education and bad example) revolted at the idea of diſtreſs this new arrangement would involve Arpaſia in; but his father ſoon quieted his conſcience by ſtrong arguments, that they were doing her no injury by taking it away with one hand and giving it to her with another. Vile ſophiſtry! but it anſwered the purpoſe of gaining the concurrence of his ſon, who, though not dearer to him than the reſt of his children, he rather more feared — and agreeable to the poſition of "perfect love caſting out fear," perhaps we may ſay, that as he feared him more, he loved him leſs—becauſe he found not in him that congeniality of mind, that flexibility in doing ill, as in the others—who were indeed faſhioned after his own image.

THE hope, however, of gaining her hand operated ſo far on Edward, that he coincided with his father's propoſition of ſtretching

ſtretching the letter of the law in oppoſition to the ſpirit of it, reſolving to make her amends by being the rondeſt and beſt of huſbands. Thus furniſhed with proper credentials, Mr. Richard Hanbury began his negociations with his neice. He ſent a meſſage to her, requeſting to ſee her in the drawing room. To which requeſt ſhe begged an excuſe, as ſhe had juſt received letters from London and Workington, (the living of Doctor Bernard) which required all the attention a violent headach could allow. She begged the favour of eating her ſoup in her own dreſſing-room, as the time ſhe ſhould remain at the Caſtle required ſome diſpatch in her affairs. This laconic note ſtruck them as if they had received a ſhock of electricity, or rather a touch by the torpedo, as their faculties ſeemed all benumbed and frozen up.

THE letter from London, which was written by her friend, Lady Derville, ſeemed deſtined

deſtined to put all the philoſophy of Arpaſia to the teſt. It was couched in the higheſt terms of congratulation on the acacquiſition of fortune the death of her grandfather had put her into the poſſeſſion of—and laying out ſchemes of different eſtabliſhments for her in town, where ſhe hoped her dear friend would paſs the next winter. In ſhort, it was ſuch a letter as would have gratified the malevolence of a Maria Hanbury, had ſhe ſeen it. All the comment the high-ſouled Arpaſia made on it was, how the heart of her Charlotte would be pained, when ſhe knew all theſe air-built ſchemes of human happineſs muſt fall to the ground with her fortunes. She determined to write to her as ſoon as poſſible, as ſhe longed for the ſoothing pen of early friendſhip to ſpeak calm to her troubled breaſt and teach it peace.

From her old friend and counſellor Dr. Bernard ſhe received the ſtrongeſt aſſurances of aſſiſtance, to clear up this myſterious

rious proceeding in old Mr. Hanbury. In the mean time he tenderly exhorted her to rely on that God, whoſe precepts ſhe had loved and followed, and to believe that he chaſtened thoſe only whom he loved, and he would in his own good time cauſe the tear of ſorrow to be wiped away from her eyes, and fill her heart with joy unfeigned. He concluded, by earneſtly requeſting her, with all convenient expedition to repair to him; for he did not think ſhe could remain with propriety with the Hanbury family; nor, he was ſorry to add, with that ſecurity innocence ought to challenge.

HER heart heaved with ſighs, and her eyes filled with tears at the concluſion of this letter. She knew not of what to be fearful — yet ſhe felt ſhe trembled. The interview then with Mr. Hanbury ſhe put off, more from the agitation of her mind than that her time was taken up by any other employment, than anſwering theſe two letters, which ſhe did before the poſt went

went out. To the good Doctor ſhe acknowledged his kindneſs with the utmoſt gratitude, and declared her wiſh to leave the Caſtle immediately—that the day after the next would be Sunday—ſhe would go once more to the pariſh church, and from thence, having a chaiſe ready, ſhe ſhould take the road to Workington, to confer with him in what manner to proceed with regard to the ſettlement, for ſhe much feared every art and chicanery of the law would be put in force to diſprove the validity of it, from the unfortunate flaw, which her uncle had, officiouſly enough, brought to her recollection.

Her mind became eaſier when ſhe had fixed her reſolution of removing herſelf from the Caſtle—ſhe buſied herſelf in putting up her books, muſic, drawings, and every thing ſhe did not chuſe to take with her at preſent, into a room adjoining her apartments, on which ſhe placed her ſeal —not without a ſigh of recollection, that ſhe

ſhe once thought the contents of the bureau ſhe had ſealed, as much her own property, as ſhe now knew the contents of that room was. The next day, as it would be the laſt time, ſhe deſcended into the dining parlour at the uſual hour.

CHAP.

CHAP. XX.

Leave-taking.

HER appearance occaſioned matter of wonder to ſome part, and of joy to the others — for Edward Hanbury and his father could not but draw a favourable concluſion from her condeſcenſion. With a dignity and propriety that accompanied Arpaſia in all ſhe ſaid or did, ſhe apologized to the elder Hanbury for not attending his ſummons the preceding day—but that now every thing relative to her future proceedings was ſettled, ſhe would have any conference with him he required. She then quietly walked to the ſide of the dinner table, gently putting the chair, which ſtood there, back to make room, Edward Hanbury ſtepping up quickly to her

her, cried, "Madam, Miſs Hanbury, "what do you mean?—ſiſter—you would "not take Miſs Hanbury's place?" and taking her hand was going to lead her to the top. "Excuſe me, ſir," ſaid Arpaſia, with a ſmile, and withdrawing her hand, "I ſhould be ſorry to give your ſiſter the "pain of twice reproving me. Your fa- "ther kindly promiſed me protection— "or I know not that I could have aſſumed "courage, even for this one day, to have "ſeated myſelf here."

"Oh! God, this is too much!" exclaimed Edward, haſtily traverſing the room—the ſervants were bringing in ſome of the diſhes—and Arpaſia, being unwilling any thing more ſhould be ſaid—and inwardly vexed with herſelf for ſaying ſo much as ſhe had—begged him to be compoſed and take his ſeat by her, aſſuring him it was totally indifferent where ſhe was placed, and only requeſted her intruſion amongſt them might make no diſ-

union

union. Maria reddened and pouted all the dinner time, though ſhe vented her chagrin by finding fault with every thing —and confined her converſation chiefly to her younger brother, whoſe mind was the kindred of her own.

ARPASIA chatted on various ſubjects with a wonderful eaſe and juſtneſs, which reſtoring an appearance of good humour amongſt them, ſet Maria's tongue running without end or compaſs—but ſhe reſolved to be ſpiteful, and took occaſion to remark the ſudden caprices of age, ſupporting her argument by inſtances that had fallen under the immediate eye of her family, of old men who had made unaccountable wills —"Do you not remember, papa," ſaid ſhe, "the French ſurgeon, Monſieur De "Plaire, who brought up his niece—and "every one thought ſhe would have been "his heir—and behold, when he died, he "left her in a manner deſtitute, bequeath-"ing the bulk of his fortune to ſtrangers, and

" and numerous legacies to his ſervants,
" with annuities to his coach-horſes, par-
" rot, dogs and cats.—Poor thing! I
" wonder how ſhe ſupports herſelf?"
The mind of Arpaſia was much too noble to feel the leaſt emotion from ſuch converſation, nor would ſhe gratify the ſpeaker, by appearing even to hear what ſhe had ſaid, which mortified her to the utmoſt degree. To ſtop, however, ſuch a malevolent tongue effectually, ſhe reminded Mr. Hanbury that he had ſomething to ſay to her—and openly declared her intention of going the next day to church, and from thence to Workington for ſometime.

" NOT to return to the Caſtle again,
" Couſin Arpaſia." cried the officious Maria.

" I KNOW not indeed, Miſs Hanbury,"
anſwered ſhe, with a cold dryneſs, " it
" depends entirely on circumſtances."

"OH!" exclaimed Edward, claſping his hands together, "that thoſe circumſtances "were favourable to me! that your re-"turn—and your ſtay was to be guided "by me!"

"MY ever honoured grandfather" replied Arpaſia, "though he thought pro-"per to leave me but little, has ſtamped "that little with infinite value—a freedom "of action."

THE melancholy air which Edward's features aſſumed plainly ſhewed he feared her "freedom of action" would never lead her to accept his hand.—"Come ſir," ſaid ſhe to Mr. Richard Hanbury, "let "us proceed to buſineſs—I have taken "the liberty of putting ſuch things as I "can ſtrictly call my own, in the blue an-"tichamber—and for our mutual and fu-"ture ſecurity have placed my ſeal on the "door—I hope I ſtand acquitted in ſo "doing."

"MOST

"MOST assuredly—undoubtedly"—was repeated by all—"Perhaps, sir," said Maria, "my cousin, may be a little short of "cash—If I thought you would not pro- "test my note, I would venture to draw "one upon you."

"SISTER!" cried Edward fiercely—"such behaviour calls for my father's se- "verest reprehension."—"If Miss Han- "bury knew how pointless her arrows "were," interrupted Arpasia, "she would "never expose herself by attempting to use "them—But since I am only to know the "determination of the family through the "medium of rudeness, I shall decline any "further conversation, and beg to know "by Mr. Hanbury's pen, what it was he "wished yesterday to have said"—she rose, with an air of haughtiness that at the instant she could not repel.

IN the most humble manner Mr. Edward Hanbury offered his hand to lead her

to the ſtudy, and begged her to overlook the impertinence of Maria with the indifference it deſerved—Mr. Hanbury too, thought proper to make conceſſions—and as ſhe indeed wiſhed to have every tranſaction over between them, ſhe conſented to accede to the propoſed conference.

It availed them nothing forming ſchemes, for they only felt themſelves bold and aſſured in her abſence, as ſoon as, like the glorious ſun, ſhe broke out upon them, they ſhrunk within themſelves—" and felt " how aweful virtue is"—Even Richard Hanbury was abaſhed—Edward's ſenſations cannot be deſcribed—however, after waiting ſometime, and again being forced to remind them, they ſtammered out ſomething of the buſineſs—All Arpaſia could learn was, their fervent wiſh of an union taking place, and a hint, by way of menace—not that he ſhould ever think of aſſerting the right the law would give him—but certainly the ſettlement was totally null and void, from the flaw.

ARPASIA expecting this, heard it unmoved—to tell the truth, their earneſtneſs in urging the marriage gave birth to an idea they were far from foreſeeing—and farther from wiſhing—It ſtruck her, that they did not feel themſelves on the ſecureſt grounds, by this union being ſo much wiſhed for by Mr. Hanbury.—As to his ſon, ſhe could be no ſtranger to his unfeigned paſſion for her—but that her uncle ſhould with ſo much celerity endeavour to obtain a portionleſs wife for his ſon, called for ſurprize—and gave riſe to ſome hopes that her caſe was not ſo deſperate as ſhe at firſt believed it—ſhe longed for the time to reach Workington, that ſhe might open her whole mind to Doctor Bernard.

EDWARD HANBURY urged his wiſhes with the warmeſt ardour; ſhe was equally cold and ſteady to him—but felt a glow of indignation againſt the father, for the unmanly threat his paſſion and diſappointment, by throwing him off his guard, cauſed

him to intimidate her with—In more anger than they thought ſhe could ſhew, ſhe was leaving the room—Edward threw himſelf at her feet, between her and the door—" It " is I—It is I am the unhappy ſufferer for " the miſconduct of others—oh! beloved " Arpaſia!—pardon me—deareſt Miſs " Hanbury, do not leave me thus—the " vital drops that warm my heart are not " ſo dear to me as you—Father, for hea- " ven's ſake ſay ſomething to mitigate the " juſt diſpleaſure of this lovely angel!— " Oh! accept my life and all its ſervices— " what are the goods of fortune if you will " not ſhare them with me?—The earneſt- neſs of Edward affected her, but although ſhe really pitied him, he gained no greater advocate in her boſom—ſhe made a juſt diſtinction between him and the reſt of the Hanburys—yet her heart, happily for her, was untouched with tender ſympathy—and even had ſhe felt it, ſhe would have thought it incumbent on her to ſubdue it —however, in this caſe ſhe had little dif-

ficulty.

ficulty.—She told him then, with ſincerity and reſolution, ſhe was heartily ſorry he had ſuffered an attachment, hopeleſs from the firſt to gain ſuch force in his mind; but irremediable evils would ſpeedily cure themſelves.—" I beſeech you," continued ſhe, " to let this be the laſt time that I am " neceſſitated to ſpeak thus harſhly—were " you poſſeſſed of all the world's wealth " and conſequence, and was I the moſt " forlorn and deſtitute of beings, I would " never unite my hand with yours; never " would I owe the duty of a child to a " man who has groſsly violated, I much " fear, every relative one he ought to have " fulfilled.—I ſtill ſay to you, ſir, as I " have before—I believe your heart is not " a bad one—I wiſh it, as the greateſt good, " the approbation of itſelf—and that you " may ſoon forget her, who never will or " can be any thing to you." She then haſtily burſt from him, and running into her own room, locking the door, gave way to a flood of tears ſhe could no longer reſtrain.

THE next morning ſhe had ordered a chaiſe to be at the church door when the ſervice was ended, and there, the gentle heart of Arpaſia experienced the ſevereſt diſtreſs, by witneſſing the grateful effuſions of her once loved dependants—ſhe had travelled ſome miles towards Workington before ſhe could recover her ſteadineſs of temper, which very ſeldom forſook her.

HER maid was the only domeſtic ſhe took with her. Not a dry eye was left in the caſtle, of the inferior claſs.—When ſhe prepared to go to church, the ſervants all gathered about her—and ſhe had a kind word for every one—and ſome little remembrance to give them.

SHE had taken her breakfaſt in her dreſſing room—Edward, the only one who wiſhed to ſee her was too fearful of offending, and indeed too much indiſpoſed to quit his room—ſo that ſhe met no interruption

terruption in her departure. The Hanburys wiſely determining not to riſk meeting with the inſult they were conſcious of meriting, if they had accompanied her to church.

CHAP. XXI.

Journey to London.

A CERTAIN heroic firmneſs, which is inherent to virtuous and well-inſtructed minds, ſupported Arpaſia in this great change of her life, and enabled her to quit the Caſtle with a degree of fortitude not common to ſo young a woman. When ſhe arrived at Workington, ſhe would not ſuffer her own particular griefs to intrude on the growing infirmities of her worthy friend. He had, from the wiſh of Arpaſia's ſpeedy coming, concealed the very bad ſtate of health he now laboured under; the palſy had ſeized one ſide, and though he had a little recovered the uſe of his hand, he was ſtill unable to put his leg to the ground—His mind, however, was unimpaired, and his zeal warm for the cauſe of injured innocence.

nocence.—They talked much and long on the ſubject—he lamented very ſincerely his unfortunate abſence during the time of Richard Hanbury's having gained footing in the Caſtle—and convinced Arpaſia, he knew ſo much of her uncle's character as to give credit to any ill report he had ever heard of him.—He propoſed entering a caveat againſt the will—and would take the advice of the moſt eminent lawyers on the error of the ſettlement, which he hoped to over-rule—In the mean time he offered every conſolation, and intreated ſhe would conſider herſelf at home—while he had one to ſhare with her—ſhe devoted all her time to the attendance of her old friend—and ſoothed his melancholy hours with reading and converſing by turns—renewing as much as poſſible the happy hours ſhe had ſpent from early infancy at the Caſtle with her revered grandfather.

More than a fortnight had elapſed ſince Arpaſia had written to Lady Derville—

her heart unwillingly gave way to ſuſpicion —and that her Charlotte, the diſtinguiſhed friend of her youth, ſhould neglect to pour into her wounded mind the balm of ſympathetic conſolation, ſhe could not believe —ſhe feared ſhe was ill—ſhe knew ſhe had long been recovered from her lying-in— whatever might be the cauſe, it preyed on her mind; though, before her good Doctor Bernard, ſhe wore the face of content, as well to chear his lonely hours as to convince him, of what ſhe really felt, her lively gratitude. The next poſt, her ampleſt wiſh was gratified. Lady Derville was abſent on a party during the Eaſter receſs— and not having left orders about letters, none had been ſent after her—the inſtant ſhe came home, ſhe opened the letter—and the next, ſat down to anſwer it—which was with all the glowing warmth of friendſhip, that felt for her Arpaſia's diſappointment —ſhe conjured her to come to her directly, her houſe—her ſervants ſhould be hers.— She longed to embrace the early friend of her

her youth, to whom her numerous obligations could never be forgotten or returned. Charlotte really felt all ſhe had expreſſed—and, wonderful to relate, was rather happier in the thought of receiving her friend as an inmate of her houſe, than beholding her as her lively imagination had painted—an heireſs, with a ſuperb eſtabliſhment—ſhe deceived herſelf, by fancying this proceeded from the love and gratitude ſhe owed Arpaſia—ſhe really loved her better than any other woman in the world—but ſhe loved dreſs—equipage and ſhew much beyond Arpaſia—therefore her friend diveſted of all theſe exteriors, which Charlotte knew the world prized, was more pleaſing in her eyes than ſhe could have been, ſhining in her ſplendour, and rivaling, if not eclipſing herſelf in the beau monde.

ARPASIA ſaw nothing but the tendereſt friendſhip in Lady Derville—and Doctor Bernard, who read the letter, ſtrengthened her inclination by urging her to the acceptance

ceptance of the offered aſylum—there was nothing in it that Arpaſia could not have done—her heart, her purſe, her arms would have opened to ſhelter her friend; why then not give that friend the ſupremeſt of all pleaſures, the pleaſure of beſtowing happineſs?

The arrangement was preſently made—Doctor Bernard propoſed following her to town as ſoon as his diſorder would give him leave—and in the mean time wrote the ſtate of the caſes in point to a civilian of his acquaintance, to whom he gave Arpaſia letters. She took leave of her good old friend in two or three days, having apprized Lady Derville of her intention of being her gueſt till her affairs were ſettled, for which purpoſe it was highly neceſſary to be in London.—Together with her maid, in a hired chaiſe, ſhe began her journey to London, without meeting any events on the road that intereſted her feelings, except the incident before related of ſeeing and relieving

lieving old Greenwood—She had taken an early dinner with Doctor Bernard, ſo that ſhe was under the neceſſity of ſleeping on the road, and the next day between ſeven and eight in the evening ſhe was ſet down in Portman-ſquare.

CHAP-

CHAP. XXII.

An old Friend with a new Face.

LADY Derville was at the dining-table when Arpaſia arrived at her houſe—ſhe begged her friend might not be diſturbed and was ſhewn into a dreſſing-room. She had not been left to her contemplations many minutes when ſhe heard the well-known voice of Charlotte enquiring for her, the vibration of her pulſe increaſed, and her heart fluttered even painfully, as ſhe recognized the welcome ſound—the door opened — ſhe flew to meet her, but almoſt inſtantaneouſly drew back ; ſhe doubted whether it was her friend or not; but Charlotte ſoon removed her doubts, and threw her arms round her neck. Nature then gave way, and the face of the lovely

lovely Arpaſia was bathed in tears. Charlotte took out her handkerchief, and gently wiped the pearly dew that moiſtened her own eyes; and when they could ſpeak, a thouſand fond enquiries, a thouſand painful recollections left them hardly any time to anſwer.

If Arpaſia ſcarcely knew Charlotte, ſhe on the other hand could not but find a wonderful improvement in Arpaſia. She thought ſhe never had looked half ſo handſome, and ſhe was right, her perſon was now matured, her underſtanding had received the fineſt poliſh and ſolidity; the beauties of her mind illumined her lovely features, and it muſt be owned there were not many firſt-rate beauties who would not have been eclipſed when ſhe was preſent.

Charlotte was pretty—but Arpaſia thought her more ſo when laſt ſhe ſaw her than now, though ſhe made a more elegant figure; but her dreſs, in the height of the ton,

ton, made ſuch an alteration in her as had occaſioned the tranſient doubt Arpaſia had entertained of her identity. She had an immenſe balloon hat, all on one ſide, with three enormous feathers, and a veil reaching much below her waiſt, her hair with innumerable curls hanging looſe down her back and over her ſhoulders; a handkerchief, a yard and a half ſquare, of double tiffany, in which her chin was half concealed, and inflated like a kettle drum. This part of her dreſs was faſhionable, but, as Arpaſia thought, not becoming. The reſt of her dreſs was a *gauze chemiſe alla regne*, drawn full round the waiſt, tied with a jonquil ſaſh, and over the paleſt lilac.

ARPASIA recollected herſelf—and ſaid, "My dear Charlotte, you have friends "with you; I heard there was company at "dinner." "I have a ſmall party; ſhall "I introduce you to them?" Arpaſia begged to be excuſed, pleading fatigue, but would not ſuffer Lady Derville to abſent herſelf.

ABOUT

About nine ſhe came to her again, telling her the party were going to the opera, and as ſhe had declined being introduced that night and muſt be fatigued, if ſhe would excuſe her, ſhe propoſed accompanying them, and would leave her to her repoſe. Arpaſia readily agreed with her friend's wiſhes, as her mind was really harraſſed as well as her body fatigued; therefore, after taking a ſandwich and drinking a glaſs of wine, ſhe retired to bed. The noiſe of the carriages for ſome hours prevented her ſleep, but at laſt wearied nature gave way, and her ſlumbers were ſo profound that ſhe was not awakened by the thunder of the footman's rap at two in the morning, at which hour Lady Derville returned from ſupper after the opera.

CHAP. XXIII.

A Modern Marriage.

AS Arpaſia had retired to reſt five or ſix hours before Lady Derville, it was but reaſonable ſhe ſhould riſe ſome hours ſooner. She had ordered her maid to call her at the uſual time; but ſhe, being told by one of the houſemaids that the family were never ſtirring till ten—not even herſelf, ſhe thought ſhe might for once infringe her lady's orders of early attendance. At nine however Arpaſia ventured to ring her bell, and in a little time Catherine attended, with the hiſtory of the houſe as Betty had informed her. She roſe, dreſſed, and waited hour after hour, when finding herſelf ſick for want of her breakfaſt ſhe deſired Catherine to enquire if Lady Derville was ſtirring. In half an hour longer ſhe received

received a meſſage from that lady, with an apology for having made her wait ſo long.

THEY met with mutual congratulations, but Lady Derville complained of a violent head-ach—and in truth ſhe looked horridly. Her cheeks were pale, and now Arpaſia was forced to allow herſelf to ſee, what the evening before ſhe was unwilling to believe, that her friend's bloom, which ſhe could not help complimenting her upon, was brought from the perfumers. The thing was eaſily enough accounted for; for on Arpaſia obſerving ſhe was a ſad rake the laſt night, ſhe laughed and ſaid ſhe was ſeldom in bed ſo ſoon.

As ſoon as breakfaſt was ended, ſhe told Arpaſia ſhe ſhould ſee her little girl, and ringing for the nurſe, a beautiful little infant was introduced. Arpaſia was extremely fond of children, ſhe took the ſweet babe in her arms, who ſeemed delighted with her careſſes. "Oh!" cried ſhe, "was

"this

" this lovely child mine, the nurſery " would be my opera, my play, my rout " —how can you live one moment with- " out her ?" Charlotte laughed at her rapture, and ſaid it was a ſign ſhe was a country ſpinſter, that ſhe was exceſſively fond of the little brat, and ſpent more time with her than any mother in the ſquare. " But," ſaid Arpaſia, " there " is another individual of your family to " whom I wiſh to be introduced."

" My Lord Derville you mean ?"

" Assuredly."

" Oh ! the thing ſhall certainly be done " in due time, but his lordſhip has a thou- " ſand engagements, and is not now at " home. I too have my ſhare, and to " night I ſhall carry you to a party at Lady " Bedington's, and from thence to ſupper " and a concert at the Ducheſs of New- " port's."

" What,

"WHAT, *only* two engagements in one "evening?" ſaid Arpaſia, ſmiling, "you "will certainly kill the little country "gentlewoman."

"I WILL inure you to it by degrees," replied Charlotte, "and to begin well, I "will not inſiſt on your going out with "me this morning, as it is to pay ſome "hum-drum viſits, which occaſionally I "muſt ſubmit to. But ſhall expect to "meet you at dinner, where you will find "two or three perſons who will accom-"pany us."

ARPASIA was well enough pleaſed to have the reſt of the morning to herſelf, as ſhe wiſhed to write to her friend Doctor Bernard, and likewiſe ſend to the lawyer he had given her letters for. Lady Derville had given one of her footmen orders to wait entirely on Miſs Hanbury, and in all reſpects ſhe found herſelf perfectly at eaſe.

SHE

She attended her friend into the drawing room at ſix o'clock, where ſhe was introduced to Lady Ann Travers, Sir William Welbank, and Colonel Howitzer, a gentleman of whom ſhe had heard much in the newſpapers, having ſerved ſeveral campaigns in America. Lady Anne Travers was aunt to Lady Derville, not young, never handſome, and had ſomething rather repulſive in her firſt addreſs. Arpaſia could eaſily ſee ſhe was no violent favourite with her young friend. Sir William Welbank was a faſhionable man, but plain in his perſon, though a very good figure.

Upon the baronet enquiring when Lord Derville was expected, Charlotte declared ſhe knew no more than the man in the moon. Lady Anne rather gravely aſked if he did not write? "Oh! no," ſhe anſwered, "I deſired him not, as I knew "not what route I ſhould take, and it "would be pity any of his divine epiſtles "ſhould be loſt." Arpasia

ARPASIA felt for her friend in being married ſo faſhionably, and, ſighing to herſelf gently, thought all this glitter of finery and magnificence but a poor ſubſtitute for the heart of a huſband.

AT ten their carriages were announced. Arpaſia went in Lady Derville's vis-a vis, and the reſt of the party in chairs.

"'TIS a queer old mortal," ſaid Charlotte, ſpeaking of Lady Anne, "but ſhe is "related to my lord, ſo I am forced to be "civil to her; and indeed I find her con-"venient, for I could not well have the "men to dine with me when he is abſent, "unleſs I had ſuch a *chaperon*."

"I AM rather diſappointed in the gal-"lant Colonel," ſaid Arpaſia, "I expected "ſomething elſe than a mere faſhionable "fop in one whom fame has been ſo laviſh "in the praiſe of."

"You are a little difficult, my dear," rejoined Charlotte briſkly, "he is much "admired; I aſſure you I was forced to "battle with half the women of the opera "laſt night to procure the pleaſure of "his company. I wonder you do not "like him, he is immenſely handſome, "and ſo much the ton, that many women "have found him irreſiſtible."

"Well, plain as he is," ſaid Arpaſia, "I like Sir William Welbank a thouſand "times better."

"Oh! how he will rejoice," replied Charlotte, "for I ſwear he never had his "eyes off you, all dinner time. I dare "ſay his heart is like the man in the al-"manac, pinked through and through. I "will be kind and ſuffer him to be your "beau this evening."

"And mortify yourſelf with the hand-"ſome Colonel," ſaid Arpaſia laughing.

Their

Their converſation ended by driving through a croud of carriages up to the hall door of Lady Bedington, when ſqueezing through a hundred powdered footmen, they were uſhered into her ladyſhip's drawing room, which was ſo full as almoſt to ſtifle Arpaſia, who having been uſed to the pure air of the country could hardly breathe in the contaminated vapour that was exhaled from wax lights, perfumed powders, pomades, and a compound of ſcents that poiſon theſe faſhionable receptacles of the great.

CHAP. XXIV.

High Life.

LADY Bedington could ſcarcely conceal her chagrin from the company on account of her grace having fixed on *her* day for giving a concert and ſupper—and declared ſhe never ſaw her rooms ſo thin in her life, and ſuppoſed ſhe muſt ſit by herſelf half the evening, proteſting ſolemnly againſt going to the Ducheſs. As to Arpaſia, ſhe wondered what was to have become of the people had there been all her ladyſhip expected, for ſhe was almoſt ſqueezed to death. Lady Derville ſat down to gold loo, as did the gallant colonel, who to the viſible mortification of a great many women there, ſeemed to attach himſelf wholly to the party he came with—the rather it might be ſaid to Charlotte, for Lady Anne declining engaging at cards, Arpaſia remained

remained with her, as did Sir William Welbank, great part of the time.

ARPASIA found Lady Anne a ſenſible woman, and conceived a reſpect for her, as more ſhe was known—ſhe on the other ſide was pleaſed with the attention paid her—and was ſecretly glad that her neice had ſo amiable a companion.

SIR WILLIAM acted as nomenclator, and gave with the names, ſome lively deſcriptions of the characters of many of theſe votaries of taſte and faſhion—which ſerved to amuſe Arpaſia, and make the time paſs agreeably away, which, from her being a ſtranger to the multitude, would otherwiſe to her, whoſe mind was not ſufficiently at eaſe to receive amuſement from ſuch trifles, have been irkſome and tedious.

As the concert was to begin at twelve, the company began moving away very faſt —and Lady Derville joined her party, in

high ſpirits—ſhe had won a mint of money, ſhe ſaid, and was all impatience to be gone "—I knew it would be ſo," ſaid Lady Bedington—" I can aſſure the dutcheſs I " take it monſtrouſly ill—but ſhe cares not " who ſhe diſappoints; I will not leave a " card at her door next winter, I am re- " ſolved.

THEY proceeded down ſtairs and went into a room to wait for the announcing the carriages—juſt as Arpaſia, who was led by Sir William, had got within the door, ſhe heard " Mrs. Hanbury's chair" called; ſhe rather ſtarted at the ſound, when a lady in deep mourning, buſtled by her immediately—ſhe had a good view of her—obſerved her to be a fine looking woman, dreſſed quite *en ton*, though above ſixty years of age. A gentleman ſaid to Sir William—" Welbank, it is a pity you are " engaged, you would have a fine oppor- " tunity of gallanting the old tabby— " faith ſhe ſeems quite deſerted."

" Do

"Do you know her?" asked Arpasia—"some years since at Avignon" he replied—"Is she related to you?"

"I RATHER think she is," answered she, "—well then, I will not say what I think."

"OH! pray do—I have a particular "reason for wishing to know."

HE then informed her in few words, that since his acquaintance with her, he had become intimate with one of her sons by a former marriage, and from him had learnt her history, which was infamous to the greatest degree—that she had been suspected of hurrying her husband out of the world and in short related the circumstances with which the reader has been pre-informed.

ARPASIA changed colour, and actually grew sick with horror at the relation—the death of her father racked on her memory,

and ſhe then, for the firſt time, too eaſily believed her horrid uncle might be the perpetrator of his murder.

"How is it poſſible," ſhe aſked, "for "ſuch a wretch to be admitted into re-"ſpectable ſocieties?"

"BECAUSE all the world, like Lady Be-"dington," he replied, "are ambitious "of having their rooms filled, and believe "me, madam, moſt aſſemblies would be "decimated at leaſt, were we to be ſcru-"pulous who we let in."

LADY DERVILLE's vis-a-vis being ready, ſhe and Arpaſia drove rapidly to Piccadilly, but to the grief of the latter the concert was already begun—the overture was finiſhed, and Mara was ſinging when they ſqueezed themſelves into a corner—Arpaſia had a muſical ſoul—it delighted in harmony—ſhe ſung in a fine ſtyle, played on the harp and piano forte divinely—and was an

almoſt

almoſt enthuſiaſtic lover of muſic—ſhe was all ear—and like the unquiet ſoul of Saul, the agitation the rencontre with Mrs. Hanbury, and the ſubſequent reflections it had given riſe to, were huſhed to peace, by the melodious voices and inſtruments of ſome of the firſt performers in Europe, which were ſelected to form a part of the evening's entertainment in honour of a royal gueſt—Arpaſia would have gladly withdrawn when the muſic was over—but her friend, Lady Derville, would inſiſt on her ſtaying till the concluſion of the fete, which ended not till five in the morning.

CHAP. XXV.

First-sight Impressions.

SIR William Welbank was not the only man who became sensible of the charms of Arpasia, on this her *entre* into high life. There is generally at these rendezvous of pleasure, such a dull round of the same people, whose faces, though fresh-made, are never new, that any one, with a little more than that circumstance in their favour, is sure to obtain a particular notice; but when, joined to novelty, they saw beauties that would justify a universal and lasting attention, with the utmost harmony of figure, no wonder that she had the eyes of the whole assembly turned upon her. A new beauty in that hemisphere, called for as many scrutinizing glasses as the discovery of the *Georgium Sidus*. There were but two opinions, and they were senti-

ment

ments of the different ſexes. It will be needleſs to explain them—they muſt be known, becauſe they muſt have been experienced by every beau and belle who may peruſe theſe ſheets, when an object of general admiration has been introduced.

HER dreſs was elegant and well fancied. With that propriety which marked and dignified her character, ſhe had prepared ſome that ſhould enable her to credit her *chaperon*, and at the ſame time not be too expenſive for her preſent fortune. She wore that night a looſe dreſs of white Italian crape, over a white luteſtring, ornamented with wreaths of black crape flowers and jets. Her head was becomingly decorated, with a hat of her own making, as indeed was the principal part of her dreſs, where, as Maſon ſays,

"Art was uſed, not laviſhed."

BEING in deep mourning ſhe was confined to black and white; her exquiſite

taſte was conſpicuous in blending them properly—to which her lovely hair was a beautiful relief, being without powder, and flowing in ringlets on her fine turned ſhoulders. Lady Derville felt then for the firſt time a gratification in her friend's decline of fortune. She ſaw ſhe was ſufficiently admired, even now—what would ſhe have been, had her introduction been that of an heireſs of immenſe poſſeſſions? To the enquiry of "Who is ſhe? I never "ſaw ſo divine a creature!"—ſhe anſwered, "a particular friend of her youth, who "had been brought up under the idea, "being in the immediate deſcent, of above "five thouſand a year, but who had been "cut out of her expectations by the "caprice of an old grandfather, and the "treachery of an uncle—and might ſtill "be a greater ſufferer through the error "or chicanery of lawyers" This ſummary account repelled the ardour of ſome of the men. And "pity for the poor "young thing" damped the blaze of envy

that

that kindled in the breaſt of moſt of the women. She, equally unconſcious of their admiration or compaſſion, was ſufficiently taken up with the variety of people ſhe ſaw, the buz of different voices, and the difficulty of moving from one room to another. The concert, it has been ſaid, made her large amends for every thing—and then the whole world might have ſtared at her, and the whole world would have ſtood the chance of being overlooked, ſo abſorbed was ſhe in the enjoyment of her favourite amuſement.

The friends had ſettled to meet in the breakfaſt room every day at eleven. Though that was a late hour to what Arpaſia had been accuſtomed, yet not having gone to bed before ſix, ſhe found herſelf not in a diſpoſition to riſe ſooner that morning. They met to lay out plans of future engagements; for Charlotte had her hands pretty full for the preſent. On that day they were to dine with Lady Anne, and

and go to Ranelagh at night; and the remainder of the morning was taken up in making preparations for a dreſs, which Lady Derville was ſtudying for the laſt maſquerade that would be given that ſeaſon at the Pantheon, and was to be on the Monday following.

ARPASIA refuſed at firſt to be of the party; but Lady Derville urged it with ſo much earneſtneſs that ſhe could no longer reſiſt. Though the amuſement was ſo entirely novel to her, ſhe nevertheleſs expected not to be entertained by it. She naturally concluded that to render ſuch places pleaſing, the mind muſt be perfectly at eaſe, and diſpoſed, from the ſtock it carried itſelf of hilarity, to form a fund for the evening; and ſituated as ſhe was, it could not be ſuppoſed that her heart was very light; ſhe almoſt condemned herſelf for, ſo early after the heavy loſs of her revered parent, entering into the gaieties of high life; yet as her affairs really required her

her preſence in London, and as ſhe had no acquaintance but Charlotte, ſhe hoped ſhe ſtood acquitted in complying with the taſte of that friend, whoſe rank in life from her marriage intitled her to partake of theſe amuſements. She knew enough of the world too, to feel the neceſſity of concealing the griefs that will ſit heavy on the heart of woe. She ſaw but too plainly, that even the ear of friendſhip would grow languid in its attention, when nothing but the misfortunes of another were related. She found that it mattered not what cares, what diſtreſs or anguiſh people carried in their boſoms, provided the cloud of adverſe fortune darkened not their features, or prevented their throwing in their ſhare of ſupport to the fund of gaiety and mirth; the eye that ſparkled with joy, the lips that breathed forth vivacious ſtrokes of wit, might for any thing the multitude cared, be dimmed with tears, or be the harbinger of ſighs and groans, when the feſtive board was over. And, indeed, what have ſtrangers to do with

with our particular calamities? The ſun of fortune ſhines on their lot. Why ſhould they be concerned becauſe it ſets in tears on mine?

ARPASIA wiſhed to give pleaſure, and ſeeing her abſolute refuſal of a ticket for the maſquerade would have a contrary effect on Charlotte, no longer offered any ſcruples, looking forward however with eagerneſs for the time of retiring with her to a delightful villa between Hampton and Windſor, where Lady Derville purpoſed reſiding after the birth-day—"to doze "away dull hours" as ſhe laughingly ſaid; for ſhe was not fond of the country.

CHAP-

CHAP. XXVI.

A Martial Hero.

THERE was a large party at dinner at Lady Anne's, amongſt whom was her brother, Mr. Travers—many years older than herſelf—a bachelor and ſeemingly quite a character. He had long aſſumed to himſelf the privilege of ſpeaking his opinion openly—and as every body who knew him, likewiſe knew, that although he would ſometimes *ſay* ill-natured things, he never did one in his life—and theſe "ill-"natured things," that people were diſpoſed to quarrel with him about, were only truths (which the adage recommends "not "to be ſpoken at all times.") Thoſe who ſeldom or never fell under his laſh were very ready to recommend all others "to "give old Cato his way"—He was ſtill leſs

leſs a favourite with Lady Derville than his ſiſter, not that ſhe had in herſelf experienced his talent for ſatire, *but that he was odd and particular—and had notions different from every body elſe*, and ſuch like reaſons, as appeared not ſo concluſive to Arpaſia, who did not object to the roughneſs of his manners, when ſhe learnt that the ſoftneſs of his heart would frequently induce him to heal the wound, his ſometimes too biling philipic had cauſed.

Not only her every action, but her every thought might ſtand revealed—of his cenſures then ſhe could not be afraid—to his ſatire ſhe could not ſupply food—but from his underſtanding and knowledge of the world ſhe might gain advantage. He was then not an object for her to avoid—nor did ſhe ſhrink from the notice he ſeemed diſpoſed to pay her, having heard her well ſpoken of by his ſiſter, Lady Anne.

In the evening, ſome of the company engaged in cards, but the greater part in converſation. Arpaſia was of the number who was attending to the exploits which Colonel Howitzer was relating of himſelf in America; the bare recital of "ruthleſs "war" made her tremble; for he was with a ſavage delight recounting a ſkirmiſh which he had with the enemy—after running through all the technical terms of attack and defence, he concluded by ſaying, "I "wheeled about—came up with them on "a briſk gallop—charged them with vigor, "and by the Lord killed every man of "them."

—"And eat them all up afterwards "yourſelf"—added Travers, who ſtood by pauſing his mouth, and knitting his brows into puckers of incredulity.

"Eat them?" rejoined the colonel, turning quick upon him, with a fierceneſs in his voice and aſpect—"why not," replied

plied the old gentleman with a cool driness—" I ſhould think the one as highly " probable as the other—and altogether " as eaſy for you to *eat* them, as for us to " *ſwallow* ſo marvellous a relation."

" YOUR age, your age, old gentleman," ſputtered forth the warrior, " protects " you."

" WELL, well, it may be ſo," anſwered the other; " and for what I know it may " be a mutual protection. But thank " heaven, my dear friend, we have done now " with tomohawks and ſcalping knives."

" APROPOS!" cried the colonel, not abaſhed by the reproof he had met with, and which, as he ſaid to one of the party, " he took from whence it came"—" When, " my dear Lady Derville will you honour " me ſo far as to name a day for my de- " jeune?—talk of tomohawks! I will " ſhew you ſome, and ſcalping knives— " Miſs Hanbury, I will ſhew you how they

are

" are uſed—you will be quite delighted to " ſee them."

" No indeed I ſhould not," ſaid ſhe, ſhrinking back from the horrid idea, as well as from the familiar air with which he both ſpoke, and took her hand—" I have " no taſte, I aſſure you, for ſuch dreadful, " and, as Mr. Travers ſays, happily now " unneceſſary things."

THOUGH the arrangement was purely accidental—and perhaps not approved by the whole party, Arpaſia was very much pleaſed to be in the ſame carriage with Mr. Travers and Lady Anne—Lady Derville, who was of a more lively diſpoſition, both from nature and ſituation, would perhaps have preferred the gallant colonel—but though ſhe might have liked his converſation, ſhe was not a little mortified to have him the ſubject of Mr. Travers's—who cut him up more than he uſually did any abſentee — for as he was, as they called him, old

old tell truth, it was againſt his principle to ſpeak truth without the object of his ſatire having the benefit of it. He however certainly meant that his lecture ſhould not be thrown away, for he was by no means ſatisfied with the conſtant attendance the colonel gave to Lady Derville's parties, and though ſhe was in herſelf no favourite of his, yet he felt for the honour of his nephew in the conduct of his wife.

"IT is not long ſince this mighty hero's "fame," ſaid he, "was trumpeted forth, "and his wonderful proweſs blazoned in "the papers. His own tongue formed a "very proper ſupplement to the Gazette "Extraordinary being the herald of his "warlike exploits Every company was "ſtormed—every public place reſounded "with his deeds—nor were they confined "alone to the dangers of war—he tri-"umphed too over the ſofter ſex. 'They "loved him for his hair breadth eſcapes—"like Cæſar, he 'came, ſaw and over-'came.'

'came.' "Not an army, however for-
"midable, could withſtand his feats of
"arms—nor a bevy of beauties, however
"virtuous, that could reſiſt him—theſe
"were his boaſts, alike invincible in the
"chamber or the field—But too ſoon it
"was diſcovered, that the great armies he
"routed were a few poor undiſciplined
"provincials, which he occaſionally fell in
"with in foraging parties; and his greateſt
"ſucceſs with the fair ſex, has been in
"being the declared favourite of an aban-
"doned proſtitute, who has laviſhed on
"her martial hero the gains of her infamy
"—You, Miſs Hanbury, who are young
"in this world of abſurdity, will naturally
"aſk, how is ſuch a man countenanced?
"why is he admitted in reſpectable ſocie-
"ties?—He dreſſes well, loſes his money
"genteelly—and by accident has got in-
"troduced, no body knows how—and no
"body knows why he is ſtill to be ſeen in
"ſuch houſes as theſe you have met him
"in—He will not however be an uſeleſs

"being

" being, if lovely young women, like you,
" would diſcriminate, and thoſe of his own
" ſex would learn to deteſt his character,
" and avoid the appearance of it in them-
" ſelves."

ARPASIA liſtened with attention, and felt herſelf flattered by the particular addreſs of the old gentleman to herſelf, and the approbation, her cold repulſe of the colonel's familiar attack, had met with, from one who had great diſcernment—Charlotte, on the other hand, yawned at the tedious attack on her favourite, and winking her eye ſlily at her young friend, ſhewed her contempt of the cenſor—they ſoon afterwards ſet down at the Rotunda. The *coup d'œiel* of which had the effect on Arpaſia, every ſtranger muſt experience on its firſt appearance. She was abſolutely ſtruck dumb with pleaſing ſurprize; for though ſhe knew it was very vulgar to admire any thing, ſhe was not a ſlave to ſuch opinions; and would boldly ſpeak in praiſe, though ſhe would modeſtly be ſilent where ſhe could not commend.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.